

THE FAVORITE

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THE GITANA.

XXXVII.

THE AWAKENING.

A year had passed since the marriage of Carmen and Oliver. We may briefly summarize as follows the events that had taken place during this time.

A few days after the wedding Morales had, according to his sister's promise, been received in the merchant's household.

Introduced by Carmen as a protégé, almost a friend, of her father's, in whom Don José had placed the most implicit confidence, he was affectionately received by old Le Vaillant. Indeed but for Carmen's timely intervention he would have been immediately installed as cashier and controller of the business, but his sister was too unwilling to allow the millions to which she hoped to succeed to pass through the hands of her brother, of whose rapacity she had had only too convincing proof. So Morales found himself installed in a non-descript but withal very comfortable position in the establishment at Ingouville. In his capacity half as steward and half as factotum, in which he was treated on a footing of perfect equality by his employers, he set all his stock of ingenuity to work at carrying out a system of petty pilfering, on the proceeds of which he was rapidly growing rich. Philip and Oliver, it is almost needless to say, had too much confidence in him, as one of Don José's most trusted followers, ever to dream of what was going on.

Carmen, on the contrary, had her eyes open and none of her brother's little schemes escaped her vigilance. She was compelled, however, much against her will to say nothing. She was at her brother's mercy and any exposure of his dishonesty would only lead to an exposure of the great fraud in which she had so successfully embarked.

Oliver had hardly awakened from the happiness of his honeymoon, when he was overtaken by a misfortune which was the more cruel in as much as it was unexpected.

One day at table Philip Le Vaillant was suddenly stricken down with apoplexy before his guests, and died without being able to breathe a parting blessing on his son.

Carmen did her best to carry off the part of a sorrowing daughter, but though her tears were both frequent and plentiful she did not this time completely succeed in deceiving her husband. For the first time he was able to penetrate the mask she knew so well how to assume. The thoughts he read in her heart filled him with dismay. Good God, he thought, if she did not love my poor old father, whom on earth is she capable of loving. For the first time, too, he began to entertain a doubt of his wife's love for him. Henceforth he was miserable. He soon came to understand that the tenderness with which he had regarded her during the first few months of their marriage was due merely to the admiration he felt for her beauty; nothing more. Now the dream had passed, and he was fully awake to the bitterness of the remorse it left behind. Remorse, for Oliver asked himself if he had not committed an evil action when he thought he was fulfilling a duty; if he really had had the right to sacrifice his oath to his obedience to the wishes of his father, and if he had not done wrong in giving up Dinorah's confiding love for the doubtful affection of Don José's daughter.

"I indeed owed Annunziata a fortune," he would argue with himself, "but I did not owe her my whole life! I had no right to deceive for her the dear child whose heart I have broken! I have acted like a madman, and my unhappiness is of my own making."

The result of such bitter reflexions as these was only what could have been expected. Oliver's love for Dinorah, which had never entirely expired, blazed up fiercely once more. His heart took to itself wings and flew off to the happy Breton land where his true love lived in retirement.

"Lost to me for ever!" was the burden of his thoughts at this time. "For what have I now to live?"

Carmen, for her part, was no happier than her husband. She was deeply hurt and enraged. She had seen her hopes deceived and her dreams destroyed at the same time that Oliver

Expressly translated for the FAVORITE from the French of Xavier de Montepin.



"ZEPHYR," RESUMED OLIVER IN A TONE OF SEVERITY, "WHAT DO YOU MEAN?"

had awakened from his dream. Until the time of Philip Le Vaillant's death she had only been indifferent to her husband. Now she positively hated him. And this is how it came about.

The Gitana, as we know, was under the sway of two impetuous, unrestrainable, and irresistible passions: pride and ambition. She had hoped by the aid of the immense fortune of Philip Le Vaillant and his son to satisfy these passions to the full and to drink the cup of pleasure to the dregs. With gold there was nothing beyond her reach. A title, she had determined, should be hers. She and her husband would take up their residence in Paris or at Versailles, and plunge into the vortex of pleasure at the court.

But on the day when Oliver entered into full possession of his princely fortune Carmen found out her mistake. She had far from appreciated her husband's character. He was no man to care for the pleasures of Paris or the dissipation of the court at Versailles. To her rage and

disgust she learned that she was doomed to a tame lifeless existence at Havre.

The disappointment was almost too much for her. She grew listless, pale and thin; took to brooding until her husband remarked the change and asked the cause. She put him off with an excuse.

Finally a reaction came. Her ennui disappeared. She had discovered a remedy, the best of remedies for ennui—a distraction.

This distraction was no other than a handsome gentleman.

The Marquis George de Grancey, Governor of Havre, was the gentleman in question whose attentions had operated the wonderful change in Carmen's appearance.

A thorough roué, like most of the gentlemen at the court of Louis XV, the Marquis had sense enough not to intrude himself on the newly married couple during the honeymoon. He knew full well that too premature and marked attentions would only injure his prospects. He

satisfied himself therefore for some months with frequent visits to the house at Ingouville in order to accustom Madame Le Vaillant to his presence. He also profited by these occasions to study the turn things were only too plainly taking between husband and wife. Thus the coolness that had recently sprung up was fully known to him, and he now only awaited a favorable opportunity to indulge in more marked and unmistakable attentions. The chance he wished for was not far off.

Since the day when he came to understand the altered relations between himself and his wife, Oliver too had become a totally changed man. The presence of Carmen was insupportable to him, and he began to indulge his humor by taking long strolls and excursions into the neighboring country where he would brood for hours together over his unhappiness. These absences, at first few and far between, became more and more frequent.

The marquis was too clever a man to let such occasions slip. While Oliver was sighing over his lost love he was entertaining Madame Le Vaillant with his pleasant conversation and by no means unacceptable attentions.

In justice to Carmen, however, it must be said that her admirer found this conquest he had set his heart upon a difficult one. She was immensely flattered and pleased at having so great a gentleman at her feet, but she was coquette enough to receive his attentions with assumed indifference.

XXXVIII.

THE KIOSK.

Oliver, on account of his repeated absence from home, did not suspect what was going on.

On the other hand, the whole city busied itself with the incessant visits of the Governor to Madame Le Vaillant, and the valets of the house gossiped about it among themselves.

This was more than Zephyr, the old servant of Philip, could tolerate. He fancied the honor of the family was compromised and was hurt in his own pride and self-respect.

"This must cease," said he, "or else some day my young master will learn from abroad the rumors that are circulating in his own house and the blow will be too severe for him. I do not want this to happen. I will admonish him myself."

Then, after a moment's reflexion, Zephyr, shaking his head, continued:

"Some people say that the whole truth should not always be told. What if Mr. Oliver were to get angry against me for telling him? Well, if he does, the fault will not be mine and I shall have done my duty."

The same night that Zephyr had formed this resolution, Oliver returned later than usual. He arrived just at the moment that supper was being served up.

As usual he touched with his lips the forehead of Carmen, sat down in face of her, helped her, helped himself, and after exchanging a few insignificant words, plunged again into that reverie which had become the best portion of his existence, as it transported him in spirit to Brittany, beside his Dinorah.

Carmen respected the silence of her husband. She too fell back upon her thoughts and at frequent intervals a sigh escaped her coral lips, while her great black eyes glanced at Oliver with a look of rallery and disdain.

"Poor fool," she often murmured, "incapable of appreciating the treasure which he possesses in me. He abandons me, the wealthy adventurer, the merchant's son, and at my feet I see a gentleman, a great lord, the noblest, the handsomest, the most refined of men. He loves me. He would give his escutcheon for one of my smiles; his soul for one of my kisses. My dream, my useless dream, alas! would be to set upon my brow the marquis' crown. Marquise de Grancey! oh!"

And Carmen's head would droop upon her breast.

After the repast, husband and wife retired to their respective apartments.

Zephyr, holding a torch in his hand, preceded Oliver into his bed-chamber and stood at the door awaiting his orders.

"Good night, old friend," said Oliver, according to his habit, "I need nothing. You may retire."

Zephyr remained immovable, like a sentinel on duty.

"Did you not hear me?" asked the young man.

"Beg pardon, sir."

"What are you waiting for?"

"Sir, excuse me, but I have something particular to tell you."

"Well, speak. I listen."

Zephyr looked perplexed.

The young man noticing his trouble, asked: "Is there question of something grave?"

"It may be that the thing is not precisely grave, but at any rate, it bothers me."

"Tell me then, at once, what it is."

"It is about Madame."

"My wife?" exclaimed Oliver with a thrill and an expression of keenest surprise.

The old valet made an affirmative sign.

"Zephyr," resumed Oliver in a tone of severity, "what do you mean?"

"Master Oliver, it is now a good while that you frequently absent yourself from the house."

"That is true, but what of it?"

"There is this, sir; while you are away Madame does not remain alone."

"I never pretended to doom her to solitude."

"No certainly, Master Oliver, you are too kind-hearted for that, but do you know whom Madame receives?"

"How could I know, since I have never asked her? Besides, she may receive whom she pleases."

"Yes, Master Oliver, but if Madame receives a certain person too often, you should know it, shouldn't you?"

"Come, Zephyr, speak out, to whom do you refer?"

"To the Governor of the City."

"The Marquis de Grancey?"

"Yes, sir."

"I see no harm in that. The Marquis belongs to the best society and it is natural Madame Le Vaillant should receive him with pleasure."

"Then his visits suit you?"

"Certainly."

"And it is all the same to you that he comes here every day?"

"The Marquis comes every day?" said Oliver with surprise.

"Without fail. As soon as you go, he comes. One would think that he awaits your departure to arrive."

Oliver knit his brows and kept silence a moment. But recovering, he said with calm:

"If Mr. de Grancey comes when I am out, nothing is more simple, as I absent myself every evening. But tell me, Zephyr, what puts it into your head to treat this matter as an event of importance?"

"Because, sir, it is talked about a little more than I like."

Oliver started for the second time.

"Ab, it is talked about?"

"Yes, sir."

"By whom?"

"By everybody."

"Not by my people?"

"By them more than by anybody else."

"What do they say?"

"They repeat in different ways that no doubt the Governor would come here more rarely if you remained oftener at home."

"But," said Oliver with animation, almost with anger, "do you know that this is a grave injury, an insult, a blighting suspicion thrown in the face of my wife?"

The old servant shook his head.

"No, no, master Oliver, nothing of the kind," said he. "No one dreams of insulting our young mistress. Only, the Governor is known as a man who does not respect women and....."

Oliver answered nothing.

"Sir," added Zephyr timidly, "you will not think ill of me for speaking thus to you?"

"By no means, my good Zephyr. On the contrary, I am obliged to you. My wife is above reproach. I answer for her, as for myself. But I will put a stop to all these rumors. Go, Zephyr, and sleep soundly, you have done your duty and I thank you again."

The old valet seized the hand of his master, kissed it and departed perfectly satisfied.

Oliver, left alone, dropped into an arm chair, with a feeling of prostration. He thus soliloquized:

"It is my fault. I have not fulfilled the duties imposed by the Almighty on a husband. Solitude is a bad counsellor and I am responsible for the harm it may lead my wife to commit. She does not love me, but I am none the less obliged to watch over her. As to the Marquis de Grancey, it is his trade to court Annunziata. I ought not to be surprised at it, but I must defend my right. Yes, my honor is in jeopardy. I shall fight."

After taking this resolution, he was calmer and slept better than he had done for many nights.

It was August. The sun poured down his fires upon the city and the plain. Carmen, leaving the house, directed her steps, across the garden, to a little Chinese kiosk situated at the extremity of a long avenue, and looking out over Havre and the sea. This kiosk was luxuriantly furnished and had become the young woman's paradise. It was there that she liked to lounge; it was there that the marquis visited her, breathing his tales of love. On the present occasion, she had thrown herself on a divan, near the open window, and was enjoying a sight of the blue summer waves. Suddenly, she heard footsteps on the sand of the alley below.

"It is he!" she murmured.

The door opened. Carmen expected the marquis; it was Oliver she saw before her.

She had not sufficient empire over herself to check a movement of surprise.

"Do I disturb you, dear friend?" asked Oliver, with a smile.

"No, indeed, my friend, but I so little expected to see you; you come here so rarely."

"Is it a reproach?"

"By no means. I should not wish you to change your habits of life. Do you not go out to-day?"

"No. I mean this to be a holiday for me."

"A holiday?"

"Yes."

"Which?"

"That of spending my time with you, if you will allow."

Carmen felt a thrill.

"Need I tell you," she said, "that your presence always makes me happy?"

"Then you consent."

"With all my heart."

"How can I sufficiently thank you."

Under the exterior of calm and courtesy, Carmen was really on thorns.

She trembled lest M. de Grancey should suddenly make his appearance.

"Yes, my dear, it is long since you have favored me with your company. Come."

And she went toward the door.

"Where are you going?" asked Oliver.

"To the house, of course."

"Why not remain here?"

"The heat is stifling."

"O, I hardly think so. The breeze blows through the windows. Surely, you do not mean to go thus."

"Let us stay, then, if you wish it," murmured Carmen, falling back on the divan.

Several moments of silence followed.

The little clouds of anxiety that passed over Carmen's features did not escape Oliver.

He was debating with himself how far these clouds denoted the presence of evil in her heart.

She was searching some means of inducing her husband to leave the kiosk. The matter was one of vital moment.

If she could draw Oliver toward the house, the marquis' visit would seem natural and intended for her husband as much as for herself.

If, on the other hand, the marquis came to the pavilion as usual, without being announced, what should Oliver think?

How was she to act?

At length, he decided to use one of these expedients.

(To be continued.)

KNOWING DOG.

"Upon returning," writes an American abroad, "from a residence in Italy, we took a steamer from Leghorn to Liverpool to avoid the fatigue of the land journey. On coming into port at Marseilles we were detained several days, the ship's boat plying between the steamer and the shore, the harbor being, as usual, crowded with ships of every nation and description. On the second day after port a most miserable, half-starved dog (terrier), one side of whose body was a mass of pitch, was observed to crawl upon the companion-ladder, giving a terrified look around him. Much surprised at the sight of the wretched animal, the captain exclaimed, 'Whose dog can this be?' and the inquiry went around among the several passengers and crew. No one owned him, and the steward, following him on deck, explained that he had found the poor creature hidden away in an empty berth. Captain M—, a kind and humane man, proposed to adopt him as one of the ship's company, and, setting him up on his legs, made a pretence of giving him a dozen as punishment for coming on board as a stowaway, greatly to the amusement of the children, and then named him Jack. A sailor greased his coat and set him free from the pitch, making him look more respectable; and, with good living and kind treatment, Jack soon recovered his spirits and seemed, out of gratitude, to attach himself specially to the captain. If spoken to in any other language than English, he would remain quite unconcerned, but 'good dog,' 'good old fellow,' would make him wag his tail and look happy. Before coming into the Mersey River we took in our pilot. Then a sudden change came over Jack, who had been a most quiet and peaceable traveler; he grew quite excited, running up and down on the bridge and jumping up to get a look over the side; so great was his evident excitement, the nearer we came to Liverpool, that he attracted the attention of every one on board. On reaching our destination, and while as yet the steamer had scarcely stopped, the ropes for mooring being only thrown ashore, Jack was observed to mount a case of oranges placed at the side of the steamer and at one bound leap on shore in a moment. 'Follow that dog,' cried the captain to a man standing on the wharf, 'and see where he goes.' Off set the man, and after some time returned quite out of breath, saying he had been obliged to give over the chase, Jack having set off at a quick run up one street and down another, evidently taking the nearest road home. The curious fact was how the dog's instinct enabled him to choose out of the many ships lying round one whose destination was Liverpool. How he came on board none of the sailors could tell; but that he was doing wrong he evidently knew by hiding himself away until discovered by the steward."

WAITING.

Thou of the sunny head,
With lilies garlanded,
And bosom fairer than the blown sea-foam;
O Spring, in what waste desert dost thou stay
Whilst leaves await thy presence to unfold?
The branches of the lime with frost are gray,
And all imprisoned is the crocus' gold.
Come, sweet Enchantress, come!

Though, in the sombre west,
The star bath lit his crest—
Pale Phosphor, fronting full the withered moon—
Thy violets are sepulchred in snow,
Thy daisies twinkle never in the sun,
Rude winds throughout the ruined forests blow,
And silent is the dove's melodious moan:
Enchantress, hasten soon.

White are the country ways,
And white the tangled maze;
Loved of the oxlip and the creeping thyme;
Bare shakes the poplar on the sullen ridge,
Cold glooms the spectral mill above the flood;
Hoarse torrents stream beneath the ivied bridge,
And lightnings strike the darkness of the wood:
Enchantress, bless our clime.

No bloom of dewy morn,
No freshly blossomed thorn,
Gladdens the importunings of sad eyes;
The day wastes drearily, through cloud and sleet;
Over the watered meadows and stark vales
The night comes down impetuous and fleet,
And ships and cities shiver in the gales:
O fair Enchantress, rise.

Arise, and bring with thee
The rathe bud for the tree,
The healing sunshine for the trampled grass;
Loose tendrils for the boughs which bless the eaves,
And shield the swallows in the rainy hours,
The pendent flames which the laburnum heaves,
And faint scents for the wind-stirred lilac flowers.
Enchantress, breathe and pass.

Men knew, and kissed, of old,
Thy garment's glittering fold—
Thy radiant footprint on the mead or waste;
Earth kindled at thine advent—altars burned,
And ringing cymbals bade the heaths be gay;
But now, in sunless solitudes inurned,

Thou leav'st the world unto reluctant day.
O haste, Enchantress, haste!

The larks shall sing again,
Between the sun and rain,
The brown bee through the flowered pastures roam,
There shall be music in the frozen woods
A gurgling carol in the rushing brook,
An odour in the half-unblossomed bud,
And dancing fox-gloves in each forest nook:
Then, come, Enchantress, come.

CHRISTMAS IN RUSSIA.

The levellin' hand of civilization has in most countries in Europe set aside the joyous merry-making common at Christmas in earlier periods. In Russia, however, the good olden times still in a great measure prevail; for, though in St. Petersburg and Moscow, and other places where the influence of European fashions extend, the ancient manners and customs are wearing out, in the remoter provinces of the empire they maintain their sway. There the Christian festival is still celebrated according to the forms which prevailed on the first introduction of Christianity into the land. The ancient ceremonies are considered of such importance by the majority of the Russian population, that early in the month of November all minds become busy with thoughts of them. About this period the fathers of families begin to reflect, and to calculate how many sausages, what quantity of salted meat, how many bottles of kirsch and other liquors they ought to provide for the coming festival; whilst the women ponder upon the chances of spending a right merry Christmas; they arrange among themselves whose house shall be selected for the entertainments, whom they shall invite to while away the long evenings with them, and what girls would be the most welcome guests to their own daughters, should it be their lot to celebrate the maiden festival. This last point in particular is matter for deep consideration; for the young ladies in Russia are the heroines of the Christmas festivities, which seem invented but for their amusement. Meetings of friends and relatives are held every day during the Phillipowki, or time of Advent, to discuss these important matters, when bitter contests often ensue, to appease which many a propitiatory gift, and many a sugared word from the lips of nurses and tire-women, who are the diplomatists of every Russian family, have to be given.

The family whose house is selected for the Christmas festivities must be rich and hospita-

bly inclined. Long before the eve of St. Wassili, the mistress of the house thus selected begins a round of visits to all the friends and relations of the family, inviting young and old, mentioning each person by name, and repeating to each the complimentary speeches handed down from generation to generation. On the following day the same round is made by the nurse of the family (babka posywatka), whose mission is to repeat the invitation to the young girls. The entry of the nurse in her ambassadorial character into every house is greeted with loud and joyful acclamations, and she is received with many marks of respect. While she is delivering her message she mentions each person severally invited, and adds the name of their place of residence; and now the mistress of the house gets in readiness for her a cup of wine, and prepares to wheedle out of her the names of the other guests invited, those of the persons who have been rejected, and lastly, but most important of all, the names of the young men and young women "elected" for each other. This last question refers to the most interesting of all the customs connected with the Christmas festivities. There is an ancient rule which determines that the mistress of the house where the festivities are celebrated shall choose for each young lady a male companion called the "elected." His privileges in his intercourse with the maiden are greater than those of other young men, for which he compensates by devoting himself exclusively to her entertainment. The couple thus joined are called suzennyja, and the lady of the house is expected to show much discretion in her selections, because whatever she decrees in these matters must be unconditionally submitted to by fathers and mothers as well as by the parties themselves.

Whilst the matrons are making arrangements among themselves, the father of the family whose house has been selected is by no means idle; he must send invitations in his own name, or the guests will consider themselves slighted. Early in the morning he calls in the swat—a person well acquainted with the duties of ambassador—and intrusts to him the greetings and messages to friends and relations. The swat departs upon his mission with his highly decorated baton of office in his hand. On entering a house he first pronounces a short prayer before the image of the tutelary saint, and then, bowing profoundly to the master and mistress says:

"Philimon Spiridonowitch and Anna Karpowna salute you, father Artamon Triphonowitch, and you, mother Agaphia Nelidowna." Here he makes a low bow, which is returned with equal courtesy, and the persons he is addressing reply:

"We humbly thank Philimon Spiridonowitch and Anna Karpowna."

The servant then resumes:

"They have enjoined me humbly to so solicit you, father Artamon Triphonowitch, and you, mother Agaphia Nelidowna, to spend a few hours of Christmas evening with them, and to amuse yourselves as best may suit you, to witness the sports of the fair maidens, to break with them a bit of bread and taste a grain of salt, and partake with them of the roasted goose."

Then follow the formulas which obtain in Russia, such as the invited not accepting the invitation until politely pressed, and eventually agreeing to come without fail.

The first evening in the house of entertainment is devoted to the reception of the "fair maidens." When darkness sets in, crowds of peasants are seen assembled outside the houses in which the great entertainments are to take place, watching for a sight of the invited guests, and pass their judgment on the various retinues and mark how each are received. Long trains of sledges conduct the maidens to the house of their hospitable host. In the first sledge sit the maiden, her mother, and at the feet of the former her favorite companion, generally a poor girl of inferior rank. In the second sledge are the tire-women, with the jewel caskets, the various sweetmeats and cakes with which the fair maidens are always provided, and presents for the domestics of the house which they are about to visit. After these follow friends and relatives and domestics—the more numerous the better, for according to the length of the train is the honor and glory that redound to the house at which it stops. Each procession, as it approaches, is headed by the babka posywatka, an inviter-in-chief of the family.

On arriving, the guests do not immediately descend from their sledges, but await, amidst the cracking of whips, the jingling of the sledge bells, and the noise and clamor of hundreds of spectators gathered in the street, the host and hostess, who, on hearing the signal, descend to the gate of the courtyard to receive them. The first greeting consists in many ceremonies, bows and salutations performed in silence, which is not broken until the parties have entered the courtyard together. The guests are then introduced into the house, and having prayed before the images of the saints, exchange greetings with their neighbors and others who are present, and after other polite ceremonies have been gone through the new-comers are persuaded to take seats.

The young ladies thus brought together, though they may never have seen each other before, at once become intimate, and address each other by the name "pedruz enka" (dear playfellow); while by the mas er and mistress of the house and all the domestics they are called "krasryja diwenshki" (fair maidens). They spend the first evening in planning games for the morrow, and in citing and guessing the popular riddles which abound in Russia, and which form one of the favorite pastimes of the

people. When the hour for going to rest arrives they are conducted to a large room in which feather-beds are spread upon the floor, and in these "the playfellows" repose during the night, it being the rule that they are not to be separated so long as the festival lasts.

Next morning the whole town or village is early in movement, and the gossips are abroad to give and receive information as to the events of the preceding evening. In the festive houses, on the other hand, there is much bustle and turmoil. The nurses rise with the dawn of day to prepare the morning draught for the "fair maidens," consisting of a mixture of wine, beer, honey, and spices; whilst the rest of the domestics apply so freely to the new wine, which on these occasions is dealt out to them in a liberal manner, that they are quiet unequal to perform the numerous tasks the busy housewife intrusts to them. The "fair maidens" alone rest undisturbed until the bell tolls for church. At this signal the mistress of the house, who must not venture to awaken them earlier, presents herself on the threshold of their door, and cries out: "Holloa, holloa! fair maidens! it is time to rise. Your elected are up long ago. They have already beaten the dust out of their coats, have looked about them in two markets, have sold three swine, have chased about in the steppes, and have everywhere inquired for their elected. Up, up! and now say what have been your dreams, and who appeared to you in your sleep?"

The answers to these questions are listened to with profound attention, for the dreams of the "fair maidens" during the Christmas festival are considered of grave import, and are repeated in every house in the village, and the babushka, or interpreter of dreams, in called in by the hostess to give a clear interpretation of that which has passed through the young ladies' minds during sleep. Breakfast is now served, after which there is an attempt to amuse by games and sports, but these generally languish, for the time is drawing near when the "elected" are to appear, and the choice which has been made for them is of course not matter of indifference. At the appointed hour the doors are thrown open, and a numerous procession enters, and the several persons are presented to the maidens by the host and the hostess as the companions they have selected for them, and to be the leader of their games.

At nightfall of the second day the rest of the invited guests begin to arrive. The host takes up his stand in the gateway to receive them, the hostess awaits them on the doorstep, and the maidens meet them in the hall. After many greetings and salutations the guests are at length seated in the great room, not, however, without much attention being bestowed as to the place assigned to each. Those whom the host and hostess are desirous of honoring are placed at the top of the room. Rich old bachelors are generally seated on the right, and next to them the elder ladies of the secondary importance. If there be any fat, fair, and rosy lady in the company, she is pretty sure to be selected the queen of the evening, and is led with much ceremony to the seat of honour. The young married women are placed on the left and observe a rigid silence. The more staid their deportment the more they are admired; and mother and mother-in-law, husband and brother, glory in the propriety of their conduct. The suzennyja, on the contrary, are grouped in the corners of the rooms and are engaged in merry converse, which, however, is carried on in an undertone, as all boisterous mirth would be a breach of decorum, and contrary to the respect due to the elder persons present. The latter, on their part, are bound not to interfere with the amusements of the young ones, or to interrupt their conversations.

All the guests at the Christmas festival are dressed in their holiday clothes, but the caprices of fashion are banished from their garments as much as from their social pleasures. The costume of the old-fashioned Russians is not more distinguished for its richness than for its antiquity. In the provincial districts the son dresses as his father and as his father's father did before him; and even female taste and vanity venture not to introduce an innovation in the costume which ages have consecrated. A large beaver cap, a pelisse of sable or fox skin, a richly embroidered kaftan buttoned up the front with silver buttons, and a girdle of rich Persian silk, or of a red kind of woollen stuff called kumatsch, is the uniform of each wealthy male guest. The married women wear the kokoshnik, a kind of head-dress made of scarlet silk, embroidered with colored silks or pearls and trimmed with lace, from which is suspended a white fatu or short veil. Their dress called seraphan resembles in shape a clergyman's gown, and is made of rich gold or silver brocade, buttoned up the front with a single row of buttons; the sleeves, which are very long and wide, are of white muslin, and a stiff muslin ruff encircles the throat. A woollen cloak trimmed with sables, richly embroidered mittens, and delicate slippers with high heels, complete the costume. Their trinkets consist of gold chains, necklaces, and bracelets of pearls and precious stones, and earrings of the same. These last-mentioned objects form the most important items in the dower of the rich maidens, and the greater their antiquity—the oftener they have descended from mother to daughter in the same family—the higher they are valued. The "fair maidens" wear the seraphan and the ruff like the married women, but the rich tresses of their own hair, wound round with a rose-colored ribbon, constitute the only head-dress allowed to them.

The quantity and variety of refreshments

provided on these occasions is almost incredible. Before the arrival of the guests a large table is placed in the middle of the room and covered with a profusion of delicacies of home growth and manufacture, as well as foreign, all served up in tin dishes and plates, and flanked with flasks without number of the various "home-made liquors" which are so much in favor with the Russians. As soon as the guests enter, they are pressed to partake of the good things prepared for them. The host presents a silver cup containing apple, raspberry, currant, or some other liquor on a wooden salver to each of the guests, mentioning them by name and requesting them to drink; and when, to prove their refined manners, they make a very long resistance, he implores them at least to taste the beverage. The mistress of the house in the meanwhile stands behind her "better half," accompanying each of his words with a deep curtsy to the guest. If the latter aim at being admired for courtesy and elegance of manner, he refuses to accept the proffered draught from the hand of her husband, but entreats the lady to hand it to him; then, seizing the cup, he expresses a thousand good wishes for every member of the family, and slowly quaffs the beverage, after which he is entitled to imprint a kiss on the forehead of the hostess. When this ceremony is gone through, the guests are requested to "partake of something more substantial," "something for the tooth," and the hospitality of the entertainers is evinced by repeated complaints that their guests do not sufficiently honor their cheer. To the young married women no wine or liquor is offered, but they are sure to find their kind hostess prepared to regale them privately in a side room with strong mead or cherry-brandy. The "fair maidens" are not allowed to partake of the refreshments prepared for the other guests, but each of them is provided with a packet of cakes, fruits, and sweetmeats, to which she applies according to her desire. The poor "elected" alone are entirely excluded from participation in the feasting that is going on around them; they are expected to be niptuschtschi—i. e., neither eaters nor drinkers, as it is supposed that the pleasure they enjoy in the presence of the "fair maidens" will nullify every other feeling.

When the refreshments are partaken of the guests begin to give signs of their intention to take leave, and it again becomes the duty of the host and hostess to press them to stay. The eloquence of the latter proving vain, masks and morris-dancers are called in to aid. These masks, which are of the most primitive description, and generally represent bears and goats, blind beggars and clowns, perform natural dances and recite fables and fairy tales, in which they cleverly introduce all kinds of striking and opposite proverbs and playful allusions to the faults and follies of many of the guests, and more particularly to the anxiety of the mothers to see their daughters suited with a desirable "elected." No one is allowed to take amiss what is said on these occasions, provided their names are not mentioned; but should the maskers in any way overstep their privileges they are immediately turned out. The host is bound to offer them the same refreshments as other guests; if they refuse to partake of any, they are supposed to be persons of rank; and are, on departing, conducted to the gate with many marks of consideration. Those maskers who may have only tasted a few drops of any beverage are seized by the servants on their returning, and swung backwards and forwards for about half a dozen times.

When the company begin to weary of this kind of amusement, then commence the so-called "dish games," the most interesting entertainment of the evening. A table in the middle of the floor is covered by the babka poziwarka with a white cloth, whilst the eldest nurse in the family places upon it a dish filled with water. While this is going on the company stand in a ring round the table, and when the arrangements are completed, the "fair maidens," their "elected," and all the married women of the party, step forward and deposit their rings, bracelets, and earrings upon the table. The hostess then brings a napkin, with which the person officiating at the dish, after depositing therein all the rings, bracelets, and earrings, covers it, while the whole company seat themselves in a circle round the table, the old nurse being placed so as to be immediately in front of the dish. The other nurses having then placed a few small bits of bread, some salt, and three bits of charcoal, on a chair close to the table, all persons present join in the "song of the salt and the bread" (chjehi soli). This song, which has many variations, but is essentially the same throughout Russia, from the confines of Siberia to the frontier of Poland, is as follows:

"May the bread and the salt live a hundred years—slava (glory)!
May our Emperor live still longer—slava!
May our Emperor never grow old—slava!
May his good courser never be tired—slava!
May his shining garments ever be new—slava!
May his good servants always remain faithful—slava!"

While this is being sung the babka poziwarka stirs the dish in which the trinkets have been placed, and at the conclusion of the song she gives them all a good shake. Other songs follow, prognosticating speedy marriage, the unexpected meeting of friends, marriage with a person of unequal rank, a happy life, good fortune, riches, the fulfilment of a particular wish, poverty, death, sickness, disappointment, etc.; and the trinkets are taken out of the dish one by one—the song that precedes the extrication

of each determining the fate of the person to whom it belongs.

These songs, though of a primitive character, are not devoid of grace in conception, as the following specimen will prove:

"A sparrow-hawk flew out from one tree—slava!
And a little bird flew out from another—slava!
They flew to each other and kissed each other—slava!
Embraced each other with their downy wings—slava!
And the good folks wonder'd and marvel'd—slava!
That sparrow-hawk and dove should build their nests so peaceably together—slava!"

At the end of each line the following chorus is given:

"To him for whom we have sung it, may it turn to good!
He who has miss'd it must do without it!
Must do without it—this cannot fail!"

At the conclusion of this some games follow, which very much resemble "turn the trencher," "blind-man's buff," etc., played by children in this and other countries. Then the guests begin for the first time in earnest to think of retiring; and though host and hostess are again bound to press them to stay a little longer, they are at length allowed to depart. Each party, however, must be conducted to the gate with the same ceremonies as on their arrival, and a full hour or more often elapses before the ceremony of leave-taking is gone through. After the withdrawal of the elder guests, the "fair maidens" and their "elected" recommence their sports, which are continued until the hour of midnight.

The amusements on the following days (for the festivities last until Twelfth Night) differ somewhat from those of the first. In these the men take the lead. Accompanied by the ladies of their family, they go out towards nightfall, disguised in masks and fancy dresses, to pay visits to their friends. The persons receiving the maskers treat them with distinguished politeness and liberal hospitality even before they know who they are; but when they have endeavored in vain for some time to discover them, then, they are on a given signal seized by some of the household, and swung to and fro until they do "penance"—i. e., declare their names. When many guests are thus assembled in one house and have feasted to their hearts' content they all depart in company to some other house, where the rest of the night is spent in merry-making and carousing. The noise and bustle of the sledges driving up and down the streets of the towns and villages during the nights that these masked visits are going on can scarcely be described; for such occasions are seized, and particularly by the humbler classes, to renew old friendships and family alliances, and to give young people opportunities of making acquaintances, which, on account of the retiring manners of the girls, are difficult to form during the more staid periods of the year.

The poorer people who have no rich relations, and are consequently never invited to take part in the entertainments we have described, amuse themselves in the streets. Masked after a grotesque fashion of their own, they perform all kinds of antics, and make up in merriment for whatever may be wanting in substantial cheer; and the bolder characters amongst them venture sometimes under the leadership of a young noble, or man of family, to introduce themselves into the houses of the rich, where with their masks on they are permitted to entertain the company, and to enjoy the hospitality of the host.

A GOSSIP ABOUT NAMES.

Readers of "The Book of Days" will remember, in the first volume, a collection of little verses brought together as illustrations of "Rhythmic Puns on Names." Such a subject, to a diligent searcher, would prove almost as endless as the kindred one of epitaphs. A few more specimens gathered since the publication of the above, has been selected for insertion in these pages, together with other fantastic exemplifications of the fertile theme of nomenclature. It is, indeed, quite hopeless to be able to set down anything on such a matter which shall be quite new to all readers; still, one frequently falls into companies in which the very best, and even the very oldest of such things are unknown, and we may reasonably suppose that to some of our readers many of these will yet be new.

On Lord Rockingham's becoming minister during our disputes with America, a declaratory bill being brought into the House of Commons which was judged to be too tame a measure by the adverse party, the following distich appeared in the papers:

You had better declare, which you may without shocking'em,
That the nation's asleep, and the minister Rockingham'em.

An old gentleman by the name of Gould having married a very young wife, wrote a poetical epistle to a friend to inform him of it, and concluded it thus:

So you see, my dear sir, though I'm eighty years old,
A girl of eighteen is in love with old Gould.

To which his friend replied:

A girl of eighteen may love Gould, it is true;

But believe me, dear sir, it is Gould without U!

Punning upon names in epitaphs has been common enough. Here are three specimens: one on the Earl of Kildare:

Who killed Kildare? Who dared Kildare to kill?

Death killed Kildare, who dares kill whom he will.

On John Penny:

Reader! of cash, if thou'rt in want of any,
Dig four feet deep, and thou shalt find a penny.

The celebrated Dr. Parr attended for a short time upon Queen Caroline, to read prayers, etc. His place was afterwards supplied by a gentleman of the names of Fellowes. Upon which the following epigram was written:

There's a difference between
Dr. Parr and the Queen;
For the reason you need not go far;
The doctor is jealous
Of certain little Fellowes,
Whom the Queen thinks much above Par.

On being told that Bishop Goodenough was appointed to preach before the House of Lords, a wag wrote:

'Tis well enough that Goodenough
Before the Lords should preach;
For sure enough they're bad enough
He undertakes to teach.

When the above most respectable prelate was made a bishop, a certain dignitary, whom the public had expected would get appointment, being asked by a friend how he came not to be the new bishop, replied: "Because I was not Goodenough." This pun is perfect in its way.

We have somewhere met with the following, which is more in the style of word-twisting of our modern burlesque writers. It is on the bankruptcy of a person of the name of Homer:

That Homer should a bankrupt be,
Is not so very Old D'-ye See,
If it be true, as I'm instructed,
So Ill-he-had his books conducted.

The pulpit has been not seldom occupied by confirmed punsters. The following cases may be cited without offence as instances of name-punning. At Belford election once, Mr. Whitebread and Mr. Howard were opposed by a Mr. Sparrow. The clergyman, a warm supporter of the former party, during the heat of the election, on Sunday morning took first his text; "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?" in order to draw from it this encouragement to his friends: "Fear ye not, therefore; ye are of more value than any many sparrows."

A clergyman of the name of Friend, who had got possession of a living in a way that rendered it doubtful whether it might not be regarded as a simoniacal contract, was imprudent enough to ask a neighboring clergyman to preach for him on the day he was to read himself in, as it is called. This clergyman, who remonstrated with him in the course of the negotiation, being humorously inclined, to the great consternation of the new incumbent, sitting in the desk below him, chose for his text: "Friend, how earnest thou in hither?"

The story of Dr. Mountain and the witty Charles II. is strongly characteristic of the times, and very applicable to our subject. A shopric being vacant, Charles happened to ask his chaplain, Dr. Mountain, whom he should appoint. "Why, sire," says the latter, "If your Majesty had but faith, I could tell you whom." "How so," said the king, "If I had but faith?" "Why, in that case," said the doctor, "your Majesty might say to this mountain, be thou removed into the sea."

James the First of England and Sixth of Scotland was, as every one knows, not remarkable for vigor and steadiness. Having heard of a famous preacher who was very witty in his sermons, and peculiarly so in his choice of texts, he ordered this clergyman to preach before him. With all suitable gravity, the learned divine gave out his text in the following words: "James, first and sixth in the latter part of the verse, 'He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven by the wind and tossed.'"

The Cavaliers, during the Protectorate, were accustomed in their libations to put a crumb of bread into a glass of wine, and before they drank it, say: "God send this Crumb-well down."

Southey, in his Life of Wesley, cites a passage from Fuller's "Grave Thoughts," which shows that even the most solemn occasions and subjects cannot always exclude this punning propensity. "When worthy Master Hern, famous for his living, preaching, and writing, lay on his death-bed (rich only in goodness and children), his wife made such womanish lamentations, what should become of her little ones? Peace! sweet-heart, said he; that God who feebleth the ravens will not starve the herns; a speech censured as light by some, observed by others as prophetic; as indeed it came to pass that they were all well disposed of."

"The trivial prophecy which I heard," writes Lord Bacon "when I was a child, and Queen Elizabeth was in the flower of her years, was

When Hempe is spun,
England's done;

whereby it was generally conceived that after the prince had reigned which had the principal letters of that word Hempe (which were Henry, Edward, Mary, Philip and Elizabeth) England should come to utter confusion; which, thanks be to God, is verified in the change of the name; for that the king's style is now no more of England, but of Britain."

Though not perhaps to be reckoned amongs

puns, yet the names of things as well as persons are liable to very odd perversion. On this account, many years ago, an anonymous writer declared his objection to our gold coin, the sovereign. "We need be careful," said he, "of not incurring the charge of high treason, by our common expressions concerning it. How strangely the following must sound to any loyal ear: 'I have got a dreadfully bad sovereign'—'I wish I could change my sovereign'—'I am sure the sovereign I have got is not worth twenty shillings.' And how many of Her Majesty's most devoted subjects, if they were to speak their minds freely, must cordially and daily wish to have more sovereigns than one. And to console the friends of monarchy, we may be just as certain that every person in Her Majesty's dominions would rather have one than none."

About fifty years ago, an ingenious writer contributed several stanzas to a magazine with an object thus expressed at the conclusion of them:

"Now, I hope you'll acknowledge I've made it quite clear

That surnames ever go by contraries.

The line of the argument he adopts to support his somewhat fanciful theory will be sufficiently laid bare by the following specimens:

Mr. Baker's as mute as a fish in the sea;

Mr. Miles never moves on a journey;

Mr. Gotobed sits up till half after three;

Mr. Makepeace was bred an attorney;

Mr. Gardener can't tell a flower from a root;

Mr. Wilde with timidity draws back;

Mr. Ryder performs all his journeys on foot;

Mr. Foot all his journey's on horseback.

To the student of nomenclature, the following medley, condensed from an article which appeared in a weekly paper full forty years back, will be acceptable:

Put away chronology—"a fig for your dates," as a punster would say—and see what a pretty confusion the world would be in about the heroes and sages of antiquity, by a reference to the door-plates in the metropolis at the present time! For instance, Homer is a coal-merchant at Paddington; Cæsar, a grocer and tea-dealer in Cripplegate; Alexander makes trumpets near Leadenhall; Regulus is a toy-man in Newport Street, Long Acre; Nero keeps an hotel at the west end of the town; and Cato the Elder makes meat-safes and wire-cages on Holborn Hill; Mars is a leather-dresser in Snowfields; Bacchus is a manufacturer of decanters and wineglasses in Thames Street; Thomas à Becket is an attorney in Bond Street; the Admirable Crichton is physician to the Emperor of All the Russias.

In searching after the characters immortalized by the Bard of Avon, one would perhaps be surprised to find the blind Lear an optician in Fetter Lane, while Edgar sells ale in Fenchurch Street; Macbeth and his wife are set up in a fruit-stall in Vinegar Yard, Drury Lane; the melancholy Jacques is established as an apothecary in Warwick Street, Golden Square; Angelo is celebrated as a fencing-master in the Albany; Romeo, having been promoted to a captaincy, is beating up for volunteers in the cause of liberty; Paris is in full practice as a popular physician. Otway is major-general in the army; Milton breaks in horses in Piccadilly; Rowe and Waller are in partnership as stationers in Fleet Street; and Isaac Newton flourishing as a linen-draper in Leicester Square. Alexander Pope, made straight and fattened up, acts tragedy at Drury Lane; Addison sells globes in Regent Street; Richardson and Swift keep lottery-offices in the City; Congreve's pieces (which continue to go off remarkably well) are cannon, not comedies; and Farquhar, instead of a poor author is a rich banker in St. James' Street. Gay, "in wit a man, simplicity a child," makes dolls in Goswell Street; Cowley is a blacksmith; Phillips is poetical only in his prose; Prior till very lately was an ensign of the twelfth regiment of foot; Collins, instead of odes, makes glass chandeliers; Butler grinds Greek at Harrow; and Cowper may be seen writing his "Task" at the table of the House of Lords any day during the sitting of parliament.

THREE OF A TRADE;

OR, RED LITTLE KRIS KRINGLE.

BY THE LATE FITZ-JAMES O'BRIEN.

The city was muffled in snow, and looked as calm and pale and stately as a queen in her ermine robes. It was night, and the tinkling of innumerable sleigh-bells made the frosty air musical. The sleighs themselves sped silently through the streets, painted blackly against the white snow, as they passed, like so many phantoms winging their way to a festival on the Broken Mountains.

It was late, for the corner groceries were shut. The last draught of poison had been drained over the counter. The last victim had staggered home to his trembling wife. The red, unwholesome light that flared over the door had been extinguished, and the bar-keeper was snoring in his bed behind the flour-barrels.

In the bleak shelter afforded by the projecting wooden awning of one of the [corner] groceries in Greenwich Street, close to where that thoroughfare nears the river, and huddled up against the side of the large coal-bin that stood humped and padlocked on one side of the entrance, two little figures were visible in the dim

glimmer of the night. Two little children they were, sitting with their cold arms embracing each other, their chill cheeks pressed together, and their large weary eyes looking out hungrily into the blank street.

Down by the wharves they saw the tall, slender masts of ships piercing the sky like the serried lances of some band of gigantic Cossacks. Among the black hulls, a few late lights still shone, and the air rang occasionally with the voice of a drunken sailor, who, from some friendly door-step, where he had involuntarily cast anchor, chanted his experiences of a young West-Indian lady of color, who rejoiced in the horticultural name of Nancy Banana.

Presently a mystic music seemed to fall from the arched skies upon the city. It was the chimes from old Trinity ringing the Old Year out and the New Year in. The thrilling notes of the changes following each other in measured flow, vibrated through the air like music made by the feet of marching angels. They jubilantly seemed to scale the slope of heaven. The wild melodious clangor floated over the great silent city. Myriads of aerial Moors, clashing their cymbals, seemed to march over the house-tops. The clock was trembling on the stroke of twelve, and Time had one foot already in the territories of the New Year.

"Tip, listen to the bells," said one of the two children, that were huddled beneath the grocery awning, speaking in a faint, though clear voice, like a bell heard in a fog, "listen. It is time for Kriss Kringle to come."

Tip's cold little lips opened, and nothing issued therefrom but a low, plaintive "I'm hungry, Binnie."

"So am I," said Binnie, with a sort of far-off cheeriness, as if his heart was a considerable distance, and could communicate only very faintly. "But let us wait. Perhaps Kriss Kringle will bring us something nice. What would you like most, Tip?"

"Coffee and cakes wouldn't be bad," said Tip, hesitatingly, as if rather afraid of the consequences if he allowed his imagination to run away with him.

"Or a plate of roast beef, rare, with potatoes and peach pie," suggested the more reckless Binnie, "just such as mother used to give us on Sunday. Poor mother!"

"What are we going to do to-morrow Binnie, to get some money?"

"Shovel snow off the stoops," answered Binnie, resolutely. "We'll go into Union Square early, and ask all around at the houses whether they want the sidewalk cleared. Some of 'em are sure to give us a quarter; we might make fifty cents, and then wouldn't we have a time!"

"When we were living in the country with mother what fun we used to have on New Year's," said poor little Tip, creeping up closer to Binnie, with a shiver, for the night was getting very cold, and a few large snow-flakes commenced falling straight down from the fleecy sky, white as the manna that fell in the desert, but, alas! not so nutritious.

"Oh golly! yes. What a good mother she was to us, and what things we used to find in the old stocking that she gave us to hang up! Kriss Kringle don't come to us any more now that she's dead. I wonder if he really used to come down the chimney, Tip, or if 'twas only make-believe."

"I don't know," said Tip. "I watched ever so many nights, but somehow I always fell asleep just before he came, and then the things got into the stocking. I used to dream, though, that I saw him. A little man with a red coat all covered with gold lace, and a long feather in his cap, and a little sword by his side. And he used to smile at me, and say, 'Tip, will you be a good boy if I put something into the stocking for you?' and then I used to promise; and when I had promised I used to hear music sounding all through the house, a great deal finer than the music we heard when we went to the circus, Binnie; and then Kriss Kringle would take off his hat to me, and make a jump, and go clean up the chimney out of sight, like a red cricket. Ah! how cold it is, Binnie, and how hungry I am. Tell us a story."

The wind arose in the north, and came down upon the city with a savage howl. The heavy snow-flakes fled before him into every angle and nook, like terrified white birds trying to hide themselves from some vast-winged, screaming falcon. They thrust themselves into the crevices of the windows, and between the slats of the window-blinds; they got under the sills of the doors. They left the centre of the streets, and flew madly into the gutters; they huddled themselves into the dark corner where Tip and Binnie were cowering, ran up the legs of their ragged trousers and slid down between their frail shirt-collars and their cold little necks. It was a fierce, biting, scratching wind of prey, and poor Binnie and Tip felt his talons digging into their flesh.

Just as the pair of vagrants had drawn closer together, and Binnie was trying to stop his teeth—which began to chatter—from biting in two the thread of the story that the patient little fellow was about to tell his brother, they heard a faint cry, something between a moan and a whistle, sounding close to them. Looking out into the dim twilight they beheld a dwarfish figure standing on the sidewalk, moaning and waving its arms. It seemed to be a little man about two feet high, clad in a red coat, covered with gold lace, and wearing a little cap, in which was stuck a long feather, that was bent nearly horizontal by the wind. A tiny sword, about the length of a lead-pencil, dangled at his side.

"O Binnie!" whispered Tip, "it's Kriss

Kringle come again. I know him. He used to look exactly like that in my dream. I ain't afraid of him. Are you?"

"Not a bit," answered Binnie. "He looks a nice little chap. I hope he has brought us something."

The little man on the sidewalk seemed very uneasy. He waved his long arms continually, took off his little cape every now and then with a quick jerk, as if he were making a series of abbreviated bows to the two little vagrants, and then hopped about, moaning the same shrill and extraordinary moan.

"Binnie, I think he's cold; let us ask him to come and lie down with us and warm himself," said Tip. "You know, in all the fairy books, if you treat a fairy well, he's sure to give you three wishes."

Whatever Binnie may have thought of the suggestion of warming any thing by putting it close to two such little icicles as himself and his brother, the latter part of the speech seemed to strike him as containing a felicitous idea. So, bracing his chattering teeth as well as he could, he said,—

"Kriss Kringle, will you come and lie down with us, and we will warm you?"

The little red-coated man made no reply to this hospitable invitation, but danced and shivered, and moaned, and doffed his tiny cap many times in succession.

"Come, Kriss Kringle," continued Binnie, beckoning to the dwarf, "come in out of the snow."

"Maybe he don't speak English, Binnie," suggested the imaginative Tip.

This was a new view of the case, and Binnie began to consider within himself whether, by some inspiration of the moment, he might not suddenly master the particular foreign tongue with which their new friend was acquainted, when suddenly the little man made a swift leap and landed right in Tip's lap.

"Why, Binnie!" cried Tip, "it's not Kriss Kringle after all, it's only a monkey!"

Sure enough, it was a monkey; a poor, shivering, little Brazilian, with pleading eyes and soft, silky hands, and a countenance that seemed to tell of a life of sorrow. A bit of broken chain dangling from a belt round his waist told his story. The eternal organ in the street; the black-bearded, heartless Italian; the little switch that scored his back at home; the cruel pinches to induce politeness, when wondering schoolboys proffered their hoarded coppers; the melancholy pantomime of sprightly gratitude which was taught with blows, and performed in fear and trembling. Poor little runaway! Poor little vagrant! He seemed to know that he had found brothers in misfortune when he thrust his timid, silky paw in Binnie's hand, and laid his little hairy face against Tip's bosom.

The children vied with each other in attentions to the poor little wanderer. I do believe that if Tip had an apple or a chestnut at that moment, hungry as he was, he would have given it to his red little Kriss Kringle. The boys placed him between them, and tried to snuggle him up in their tattered clothes. He clung to them as if he really loved them. His little hand found its way into Tip's shirt bosom,—if that collection of discolored tatters which he wore beneath his jacket could be called a shirt,—and laid just over his heart. The poor vagrants kissed and fondled their pet; and God help them! were almost happy for the time.

Meanwhile, the snow drifted and drifted right under the shed where the vagrants lay. It began to pile itself up about them on all sides, and it clung to every projection of their persons. The air grew colder and colder. The wind swooped at them under the shed-sill, like the wide-winged, shrinking falcon,—as if it would take them up in its talons and bear them away to its bleak nest to feed its unfledged tempests. Closer and closer the three houseless creatures drew together, until a great drowsiness fell upon them, and the sigh of the storm sounded farther and farther off, and sleep and snow covered them.

Then a dream came to Binnie and Tip. Red little Kriss Kringle jumped up suddenly from his rest in their bosom, clad in the brightest finery. A wondrous white egret's plume waved in his cap, and he wore a breastplate of diamonds. His red coat was redder than the blossoms of the wild Lobelia, and his sword was hilted with gold. Then he said to the boys, "Boys, ye have been very kind to me, and sheltered me when it was cold, so now ye shall come with me to the sweet land of the South, where ye shall idle in the sunshine for ever and ever!"

Then he led them down the wharf near by, where, moored among the black hulls of the ships, they found a beautiful golden boat, so bright with many-colored flags that it seemed as if her tall masts had swept the rainbows from the sky. Fairy music sounded as the sails were set, and they sailed and sailed until they landed on the sweet Southern shore.

There they found strange trees with leaves of satin and fruit of gold. Wonderful birds shot like stars from bough to bough. The rivers sang like musical instruments. From the limbs of the trees trailed brilliant tapestries of orchidaceous flowers, which with their roots in the air, sucked the sunlight into their secret veins, until their blossoms were covered with the splendor of Day.

Here red little Kriss Kringle led them to the foot of a huge tree covered with white flowers, and made them lie down while he fed them with fruits of a magical flavor. The sun shone cheer-

fully on their heads. The birds sang their pleasant songs. The huge tree rained its white blossoms on them, as they dropped off to sleep weary with delight, until they reposed beneath a coverlet of scented snow.

When the first day of the New Year dawned, and the grocer's boy came from his bed behind the flour-barrels to take down the shutters, he saw a mound of snow close by the side of the coal-bin. He brought the shovel to take it away, and the first stroke disclosed the three little vagrants lying stark and stiff, enfolded in each other's arms.

A FREE LUNCH.

The "Free Lunch," one of the "institutions" of America, is provided with unusual liberality in the Crescent City. It has no connection with Mr. Bright's ideal free breakfast table. Its freedom consists in this—that the consumer does not pay for it. I have heard of ordinaries in the old country at which dinner was given gratis, but you were expected to order a bottle of wine, the price of which was made to cover the cost of the whole repast. I have also been told of people who tried to get the better of the Excise by selling you a straw, and at the same time making you a present of a glass of something to drink. The enjoyment of my free lunch is not embittered by the reflection that there is any such dodge about it. My digestion is not impaired by qualms of conscience. I have defrauded no one. I have eaten of the best, I am satisfied, and I am welcome. I pay for my glass of sherry, my "brandy squirt" (the New Orleans equivalent, and not a good one, for brand-s), or my "chop" of ale, exactly the same sum as I should expend for such beverages if I took them at a time when no lunch was going on, or if I ate nothing. And the best of it is, that if I have no money in my pocket to drink withal, I may eat my fill, and no one will say me nay.

The Free Lunch is spread in symposiums the like of which are unknown to you. Your pewter covered bar, with a fat publican behind it, wheezing in an atmosphere of stale beer and sweet biscuits, or your refreshment saloon, resplendent with coloured glass, and bewildering with chignons, are nothing like them. A spacious room, with little or no ornament about it, with latticed doors leading from the street, a long array of counter, a long array of business-looking bottles behind it, a long array of white aproned and snowy-shirted attendants, deftly mixing "drinks" between the two, and dispensing crushed ice lavishly in bright copper scoops, as though they were cashiers in the Golconda Bank unlimited, and you are taking the proceeds of your cheque for two millions, in diamonds—that is a New Orleans drinking bar. At a side table stands all day long a supply of bread, butter, crackers, cheese, pickles, dried ham and beef, and other snacks, at the mercy of all comers; but from 10 A.M. to mid-day is spread a trussed board, groaning under a substantial repast. Oyster soup, when those bivalves are in season, sheep-head (the turbot of the Mexican Gulf), turkey, ham beef, and mutton, roast and boiled, in abundance; vegetables *ad lib.*, a dexterous carver to slice for you, and no one to cry "Hold enough!" If, like Oliver, you ask for more. This is the free lunch.

But do respectable people go into bar-rooms? There was a time in the history of New Orleans when refusal to "take a drink" was an insult calling for satisfaction by sword or gun. Even now it is hard work to get an excuse accepted. A vast amount of business is done in the street—Carrondelet-street especially, and I may safely say that no single bale of cotton or bag of oil cake is bought or shipped without the transaction being solemnised by "taking a drink." Dry bargains are forbidden by a sort of unwritten Statute of Frauds. Hawkins and Santini are notaries public unenrolled. These bar-rooms are unacknowledged offices, but many a good bargain is made before them every day, and sealed with "a drink." Politicians also are a thirsty race, and must be prepared to treat largely. Eloquence is all very well in its way, but a glass of whisky "straight" as a persuasive influence is not to be despised. The operation known as "lobbying," though it owes its name to the lobbies of the Legislative Chambers, is now carried on, for the most part, in the nearest bar-room, where the dusky conscript fathers who now rule Louisiana settle many of the affairs of the country—let us hope for the country's good—over drinks. Now, as cotton and politics absorb nineteen-twentieths of the population, the question which heads this paragraph is answered. The gravest of the grave may be seen going into a drinking bar without detriment to his character; and he who makes an unsteady exit therefrom, though it should be in broad daylight, is not thought the worse of on that account. In short, libations to Bacchus are tolerated at present in New Orleans much as they were with us at home when the present century was in its teens; only the altar is set up in the bar-room instead of on the dinner-table, and John Barleycorn (in the form of whisky) has ousted the monopoly for providing the sacrifice formerly enjoyed by the grape. Little or no drinking takes place at or after dinner, or in private houses. It is all done openly at the bar.

What is "a drink?" In one sense of the question it is fifteen cents, of about sevenpence—no matter of what it be compounded. Ask for whisky, rum, gin, sherry, straight—i.e. raw—for a cherry cobbler, mint julep, Santa Cruz

punch, Calamba squirt, cock-tail of any composition, lemonade, or what you will—it is a "drink," and its cost is fifteen cents. Ask for anything "straight" or to be mixed by yourself and no measured ration is served you; the bottle is handed, and you pour at your own sweet will. At some bars where an extra succulent free lunch is served up-stairs to the habitués of the place, "a drink" is twenty-five cents. Before the war the universal tariff was ten cents. Brandy, in any form, is extra.

The population of New Orleans is in round figures 191,000. It supports 800 licensed bar-rooms and at least another 400 institutions, such as groceries, coffee-houses, &c., wherein liquor may be had unknown to the city assessors. Now put aside as nondrinkers (such as women children, temperance folk, sick people, and the like) only one half the population, and there is one liquor shop for every eighty thirsty souls. Of the 800 legitimate bar-rooms, I should say that 500 are within a half-mile circuit of the Clay statue—the centre of business in New Orleans. I know of one point within this zone from which you can count fourteen bar-rooms in 230 yards. And they all give free lunches! Is, then, the trade overcrowded? Is bar-keeping a bad business in that sordid sense of the adjective which would imply that it does not pay? I am afraid it is one of the best, in that respect, we have; and it is appalling to think of the number of drinks that must be taken to keep it up. Such a meal as is provided as a "free lunch" at a first-class bar-room, if had at a restaurant, would cost at least a dollar. Take the profits of "a drink" at five cents, and it follows that there must be twenty drinkers for every free luncheon, to make things balance on this item, but with rent, wages, license, and stock-in-trade yet to be provided for. The rent of a well-situated bar is not less than 1000*l.* a year—its outgoings about 40*l.* a day. I know of one which, even in the bad times which followed the "late unpleasantness" with the United States, made 75,000 dollars clear profit in a twelvemonth!

But let me return to the free lunch. This is an institution which could not exist out of the soil in which it has been gradually developed. Attempts were made to transplant it in New York, and, I believe, in Boston. They failed. It is like the British Constitution—a thing of checks and counter-checks, held together by compromises and regulated by unwritten laws as vague as they are respectable. Like Topsy—it 'grewed.' Some enterprising bar-keeper, stung by competition, added to the universal crackers and cheese, by way of attracting custom. Great are the powers of competition! Once upon a time, rival coaches on the Brighton road not only carried passengers for nothing, but gave them glasses round-hot with—into the bargain. So with the free lunch. Competitors followed suit, and gradually something else, and something else, and something else was added to the repast until we find it what it is. It would be difficult to make it better. Another condition in its favour is the absence in New Orleans of the 'rough,' as you have him over the water. We have plenty of rough people, but no roughs such as would render a similar entertainment impossible in London. Labor of all sorts is also so well paid that the class that might ruin it by abuse does not exist—or at any rate does not unfairly use its privilege. I am told that free lunch obtains in San Francisco; but with this exception it is not to be found, as I have described it, out of New Orleans.

When the moral philosopher has discussed his soup, his slice of sheep-head, and his help of turkey, and has, let us hope, taken the customary "drink," he may well employ his time in studying the natural history of the free luncheon. Here is the man of business, whose work has called him so early from his dwelling that he has not had time to breakfast. He has "struck" a good thing (say in oilcake) that morning, and is in high spirits. With a friendly nod at the bar-tender, whom he knows, he pitches in hastily. Here is the gentleman whose fishy eyes and trembling hand denote that he has earned his lunch over-night, but who lacks the appetite to enjoy it. He is well known, and the choicest morsels are piled on his plate, from which he picks half a mouthful or so, and then retires to the bar for a brandy-squirt. Loafing about the doors and in corners are individuals who are waiting on Providence; i. e. for the entrance of some one who will sit and treat of a drink, and so entitle them to a place at the table which they are shy of taking. The delight of these people to see you about midday, the interest they take in your affairs, and the health and welfare of your family, is only appeased by an inquiry on your part as to what it shall be. "It" is a drink. Very different from these is the "jolly dog" who, without a cent in his pocket, takes his lunch with the confidence that he has paid for it over and over again in the past; and the hope that he will put it all back, and more, in the future. Many a champagne cocktail has he "stood" at that bar, and will again when luck comes round. The chances are that the bar-keeper himself will treat him if no one else does, but he scorns the tout for drinks. Not so great a favorite is the regular free luncheon; a temperate person, who eats his dollar's worth, takes his fifteen cents of liquor, and departs with the idea that he has patronized the establishment. He is as difficult to please as those supporters of the drama who go in with orders. Who is this hungry-looking man in seedy black, who stands apart eyeing the smoking viands? Perhaps a clerk, or schoolmaster, or artist, emigrated from Europe, whom somebody (who

knows nothing whatever about what he recommends) has told that he is sure to find employment in the Crescent City; and who has been wandering about for days in search of it, in vain. If he could roll cotton bales on the levee he might earn his three dollars a day; but he has not strength for this. By the sweat of his brains alone he can live, and there is no brain work to be got. Some one has told him of free lunches, and hunger has so far got the better of pride as to drive him past the doors. He has plenty of stomach, but no heart to avail himself of the hint. Now we see the free lunch in its noblest aspect. The carver catches his eye, and with a wave of his long glittering blade beckons him to the table. No questions; no "Well you can have some this time;" no dole flung at him in charity (?). The carver calls him "sir," and is as attentive as though he were a millionaire. Our poor friend not only lunches, but breakfasts, dines, and sups that day like a lord.

It is part of the *lex non scripta* of the free lunch that the luncheon who is first "through" (to use the vernacular) should go and order drinks for his companion. Everybody knows everybody, and so few lunch alone: indeed, it is almost an offence against propriety to do so. It is amusing to note how slow some are over their last piece of celery or salad; to observe with what care they pick up the last crumbs of their repast, though they might be rehoped, or help themselves to a fresh supply. And this, not through what we call meanness (American mean and English mean are different qualities); but out of that love for getting the better of your neighbor in small matters which is common to both sides of the Atlantic. Meanness is not a Southern vice. The man who is scraping his plate over yonder to gain time and escape paying for drinks will stand bottles by and by with pleasure, only he likes to do the "smart" thing just now. There are, of course, exceptions. "Dead beats," who liquor, and smoke, and chew all day at other folks' expense, are to be found; but a lavish liberality in "standing," an eagerness to be the first to say "Will you join me?" is the rule. "Will you join me?" does not mean paying half. A stranger never pays for drinks in America.

ENGLAND IN THE OLDEN TIME.

The fifteenth century, especially, was celebrated for its great feasts, at which the consumption of provisions was enormous. The bills of expenses of some of them have been preserved. In the sixth year of the reign of Edward IV. (A. D. 1466), George Neville was made Archbishop of York, and the account of the expenditure for the feast on that occasion contains the following articles:—Three hundred quarters of wheat, three hundred tuns of ale, one hundred tuns of wine, one pint of hyppocras, a hundred and four oxen, six wild bulls, a thousand sheep, three hundred and four calves, the same number of swine, four hundred swans, two thousand geese, a thousand capons, two thousand pigs, four hundred plovers, a hundred dozen of quails, two hundred dozen of the birds called "rees," a hundred and four peacocks, four thousand mallards and teal, two hundred and four cranes, two hundred and four kids, two thousand chickens, four thousand pigeons, four thousand crabs, two hundred and four bitterns, four hundred herons, two hundred pheasants, five hundred partridges, four hundred woodcocks, one hundred curlews, a thousand egrettes, more than five hundred stags, bucks, and roes, four thousand cold venison pasties, a thousand "parted" dishes of jelly, three thousand plain dishes of jelly, four thousand cold baked tarts, fifteen hundred hot venison pasties, two thousand hot custards, six hundred and eight pikes and breams, twelve porpoises and seals, with a proportionate quantity of spices, sugared delicacies and wafers or cakes. On the enthronement of William Warham as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1504, the twentieth year of the reign of Henry VII., a feast was given for which the following provisions were purchased:—Fifty-four quarters of wheat, twenty shillings' worth of fine flour for making wafers, six tuns or pipes of red wine, four of claret wine, one of choice white wine, and one of white wine for the kitchen, one butt of malmsey, one pipe of wine of Osey, two tierces of Rhenish wine, four tuns of London ale, six of Kentish ale, and twenty of English beer, thirty-three pounds' worth of spices, three hundred lings, six hundred codfish, seven barrels of salted salmon, forty fresh salmon, fourteen barrels of white herrings, twenty cades of red herrings (each cade containing six hundred herrings, which would make a total of twelve thousand), five barrels of salted sturgeons, two barrels of salted eels, six hundred fresh eels, eight thousand whelks, five hundred pikes, four hundred tenches, a hundred carps, eight hundred breams, two barrels of salted lampreys, eighty fresh lampreys, fourteen hundred fresh lampreys, a hundred and twenty-four salted congers, two hundred great roaches, a quantity of seals and porpoises, with a considerable quantity of other fish. It will be understood at once that this feast took place on a fish day. This habit of profuse and luxurious living seems to have gradually declined during the sixteenth and first part of the seventeenth century, until it was extinguished in the great convulsion which produced the interregnum. After the Restoration, we find that the table, among all classes, was furnished more soberly and with plainer and more substantial dishes.—*Our own Fireside.*

SONG OF THE PEN.

Hurrahs and bravos for the Pen!
And let the chorus ring again,
The gods ne'er gave to thinking men
A prize of higher worth.
Its monuments adorn the land,
Immortal are its trophies grand;
Come smiles and tears at its command—
Its sceptre rules the earth.

And oh, how dazzling is the dower
Of Genius in that triumph-hour,
When inspiration's magic power
Inflames his heart and brain!
On Fancy's wings he soars sublime,
And conquers death, despair, and time;
Etherealized by dulcet rhyme,
He half forgets his pain.

With eyes deep sunk and visage long,
He coins his health and strength in song,
And what for him will care the throng
Whose praises he adores?
Ambrosial seems his feast on air,
He glories in a garret bare,
He dines on sorrow, sups on care,
And dreams on barren floors.

And yet thou art a glorious thing,
World-moving Pen, and wonder's spring.
Czar, kaiser, emperor, nor king
Like thee an army owns.
First in the vanguard of the fight,
Where streams the banner of the right,
Thy hosts advance in phalanx bright,
That shame the blaze of thrones.

The soldier girds his battle-blade,
In gorgeous panoply arrayed,
But thine shall be a humbler trade—
To bless the homes of men.
Thine is the grandeur of the mind,
In heavenly melodies enshrined,
Sun-robbed, radiant, unconfin'd,
The all-victorious Pen!

Proud Science boasts its wizard skill;
The telegraphic harpstrings thrill,
And courier engines whistle shrill
Through startled grove and glen.
The Press, the fulcrum of the free,
Hath raised from dust the toil-bent knee;
But these would only useless be
Without the mighty Pen.

Jove's daughters own the regal sway,
And Painting, Sculpture, Music lay
Before thy throne their garlands gay—
Thy fame is blown afar.
By thee those precious boons of heaven
To crown our mother-isle are given—
Stern Justice, with her balance even,
And Freedom's holy star.

Hail, poet's pen! Thou may'st aspire
To kindle souls with living fire,
And flash like the electric wire
Thy burning sparks along.
Apollo's chaplet brighter glows
Than beaming sun or blooming rose,
And, oh, I would be one of those
In fellowship with song.

AN OLD MAN'S DARLING.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

ETHEL'S FIRST CONQUEST.

The churchyard at Hawkshaw, in Kent, is one of the prettiest in England. Thirty years ago, the then vicar made a regular garden of it, taking advantage of certain abrupt inequalities of ground; planting shrubs of cheerful character, to the exclusion of yews and weeping-willows; causing the gravel-paths to wind about, instead of intersecting the lawns at right angles; and encouraging the practice of converting graves into flower-beds. To be buried there does not seem like being buried so much as being planted out, and the grave is robbed of much of that extrinsic terror for which we English seem to entertain a gloomy predilection.

I speak of the beauty of this churchyard in the present tense, because it is tended with as much care now as when the late vicar was the proprietor, not a tenant of it; but it was only recently laid out, and the roots of the young trees had hardly got fairly hold of the soil on the fine October afternoon when Dr. Antrobous entered it for the first time. Dr. Antrobous was very learned, very ingenious, very clear-headed, and very young; as young as a man well could be to have taken the degree of doctor of medicine. His student friends called him Faust, averring solemnly that he was well on in his second century, but had drunk a rejuvenating potion, some witch's put-me-back; and it was certainly difficult for the ordinary learner to imagine how he could have acquired so much knowledge in so few years. The secret of his success was, that he loved science for its own sake, without any thought of self-interest or fame. Possessed of a small property, which rendered him independent of profession, private practice was not the all-important matter to him which it is to most medical men, and he was quite content to settle down in a quiet

country town, with a small, poor, and healthy population, where he had plenty of leisure to devote to the ologies.

Had he, however, been ever so desirous of professional success, it is doubtful whether Antrobous could have attained it. He was thought very highly of at hospitals; more than one learned society courted him; high-class medical and philosophical journals considered his manuscripts as valuable as bank-notes. But he was modest, diffident, hesitating; and he was not a ladies' man.

It was on the third day of his arrival that he entered the pretty churchyard, hammer in hand; for when he found himself in a new part of the earth, he was like a schoolboy alone with a pie, he could not keep his fingers off the crust; and in cutting a pathway on the side of a hill, the workmen had exposed a rock of interesting character, there being room for argument as to how it got there.

Dr. Antrobous was of middle height, diminished by a slight stoop, the result of studious habits, which had likewise compelled him to wear spectacles; he had a benevolent expression of countenance, and a broad massive forehead. His dress was always the same, summer and winter, grubbing in the fields, dredging at sea, or at a patient's bedside; and consisted of shepherd's plaid trousers; black tail-coat and waistcoat; spotted silk handkerchief, twisted several times round his neck, and tied in a little bow, which was sometimes under one ear, sometimes under the other, never straight; high shirt collars, intended to stick up, but not succeeding very well; and a chimney-pot hat in need of brushing, and worn too far back on his head. But he was as clean, though not so sleek, as a cat.

He was in geological luck that afternoon, for Mattock the sexton was digging a grave, and so revealing secrets of subsoil. Mattock misinterpreted the interest taken by the stranger in his operations.

"It will be a dry un, sir," said he, pausing in his work, and looking up to the top of the pit in which he stood.

"So I perceive—chalk," replied the doctor.

"You knowed her, may be, sir?" continued the sexton, leaning on his spade in a chat-inviting manner. Experience had taught him that promiscuous conversation often led to beer.

"I can't say till I hear her name; most probably not."

"Cane, her name was—Miss Cane, as is to be buried to-morrow."

"No, I never heard of her."

"Ah, then you haven't been to Hawkshaw before; that's certain. No offense; I thought you might have been a relative. O lor, what a winner she were!"

Doubtful whether this was praise or blame, Dr. Antrobous uttered a neutral "Ah!"

"She were," continued Mattock, "reg'lar lightning and vinegar; a reg'lar lady too, but such a tongue! The children used to cut and run when they saw her, and she could never keep but one servant, who was stone deaf. But she meant no harm, bless you; she had a kind heart."

This last sentence was a tribute to death, not the result of experience. Mattock remembered the proverb, *de mortuis, etc.*, just then, and felt that it applied with extra force when the departed was a customer. He would gladly have mentioned her virtues, but they did not chance to occur to him; so he shook his head, and went on digging.

"Papa!" cried a silvery voice behind Dr. Antrobous, who turned round, and saw a fairy, who, finding a stranger instead of a father, opened her small mouth and large eyes very wide, and took stock of him. Approving, she remained where she was, and smiled.

"Well, my dear," said the doctor, "you see I am not papa. Have you lost him? Shall we look for him?"

"No. Who are you?"

"I am Gregory Powder."

"Where are the flowers?"

"The flowers; well, I do not see any. There are no autumn flowers planted, and the summer flowers are all dead."

"What a pity!"

"Never mind, dear; they will all come again in the spring!"

"All come in the spring? Sure?"

"Yes; their roots are in the ground, and alive."

"Why is Mattock digging the hole?" asked the child, peeping in.

"They are going to bury Miss Cane."

"Oh! Do you know I did not like Miss Cane—much." Then, after a pause: "I hope Miss Cane won't come up again in the spring!"

"Oh, you nice child!" cried the doctor, catching her up, "I have a good mind to kiss you."

"You may kiss me if you won't se'ub," said the little maid composedly. "Papa se'ub e'adful sometimes. Oh, there he is!"

The doctor turned in the direction indicated, and saw a stout man with a green net, who immediately called out:

"What, Antrobous! I am glad to have lit upon you in this lucky way. I called on you an hour ago, but you were out. I was pleased to see your card, yesterday, I can tell you. Is it true that you are coming to settle here?"

The speaker was none other than the famous Scaraby, whose researches in natural history once earned for him the title of the English Buffon, though of late years he had confined his personal investigations very much to moths and beetles. His worship of science, however, was catholic, and he was the president of a philoso-

phical society, which reckoned Dr. Antrobus amongst its most promising members.

"I have fallen in love with your little girl," said the doctor. "By-the-bye, Scaraby, I did not know that you were a family man."

"I have lost all but Ethel," replied Mr. Scaraby; "and their mother has gone from me too. I should be a lonely man without my baby, else I had sailed before now to Fevraguana in search of the Singewing furdevorans, of which I have no satisfactory specimen. It would be hardly prudent to take her, I suppose?"

"Hardly; especially as, if you lost her while moth-hunting, you would not find her again in a tropical forest so easily as in a Kentish churchyard."

"True; and she is a regular little truant.—Are you not, Ethel?"

"Sometimes; when papa's vewy long cashing butterflies."

The acquaintance which already existed between Scaraby and Antrobus soon ripened into a close friendship. Their tastes, their interests, were the same; their dispositions were similar, and the twenty years difference between their ages was never thought of by either. And Ethel played about the pair of philosophers like a kitten. It was absurd to see how fond Antrobus grew of her. She called him by the first name he had given himself, Gregory Powder, for six months; when he was promoted to Uncle Gregory, and there he remained, though his real name was William. She was indeed a very nice child; never troublesome, always able to amuse herself, and very original.

When the doctor had been settled three years in Hawkshaw, she put the final touch to her conquest. He went to the bank one day upon some business which necessitated an interview with one of the partners in his private room; and as he was coming out again into the office, he heard his little friend's voice saying: "Please, will you give sixpence for that?" and drawing back and peeping, he saw her face over the counter with her chin surmounted. The grey-headed clerk whom she addressed took the paper she presented, and said with a voice trembling with suppressed laughter: "How will you have it Miss Scaraby's—in silver or copper?"

"Copper," she said decisively, and walked off with a handful of halfpence.

When she was clear of the premises, the doctor came forward and received this document, written in text-hand on a leaf torn out of a copy-book, from the convulsed clerk:

please pay ethel or a bare sickpense 6d. ethel.

It seems a pity that Ethel should ever have grown out of her quaint childhood, but she did it so imperceptibly that the transition was not observed by either her father or the doctor. Other changes took place; Antrobus ceased to live alone. He owned two maiden aunts who had hid themselves away in an odd corner of Devonshire, and subsisted pretty comfortably on annuities. When one died, however, the other found herself in somewhat straitened circumstances, so this dutiful nephew had her to keep house for him, and Ethel called her "Granny," she was a good soul, but rather odd and prudish, and did not much approve of the title at first. Indeed, she once remonstrated with the child; but the effect of this was that the next time Ethel called her Granny in public, she turned round and explained that Miss Antrobus could not be her grandmother really, because she had never been married, and she only called her so out of affection. So, after that, the prudent spinster accepted her brevet in silence, and by the time the girl came to live with her, would have felt hurt had she called her anything else.

Came to live with her? Yes. When Ethel was fourteen, her father caught a pleurisy in the Essex marshes, where he was beetle-hunting, and died. He left his collections to his university, his property to his child, and appointed his friend and executor, Dr. Antrobus, her guardian.

This was Ethel's first acquaintance with death, for she was a mere infant when she lost her mother, and the mystery, the helpless grief, the hopeless horror of it shattered her childhood. The wave of sorrow passed over her in time, but never again did she recover the careless, thoughtless, bird-like happiness of her former life. She knew now the evil as well as the good; her eyes were opened to the cruel reality, that every path in this world leads to one dreary waste. For the rest, the burden of the child's sorrow was lightened so far as possible; she was spared the sudden plunge from comfort to poverty, from affectionate sympathy to cold selfishness, from petting to tyranny, which so often awaits the orphan girl. The intimacy between the families had been so close that there was little change in leaving one home for the other, and with both her guardian and her aunt, her wish was law. Indeed, Ethel Scaraby ought to have grown up into an insufferable young woman, instead of, as was the case, an exceedingly natural, self-forgetting, charming one; but there are some natures that you cannot spoil, at least by kindness.

A little more than a year after Mr. Scaraby's death, Dr. Antrobus was induced to join an expedition having for its object the investigation of the flora, fauna, and geological phenomena of the northern and eastern coasts of Africa, extending from Algeria to Abyssinia, and comprising Tripoli, Egypt, and Nubia. So he set his house in order. Ethel was to continue living with his aunt until the uncertain date of his return, the difficulty about her education being comfortably solved by the fact of there being a

very good girls' school in the neighborhood, to which competent masters came periodically from London. He considered his ward to be far too precious a trust indeed to be risked in the chance company of a school while her mind and heart were forming; so he made arrangements with the various professors—warranted middle-aged and married, every man of them—to give her lessons separately. It was rather expensive, but that did not matter; for living in Granny's simple way, it was impossible to spend her income on her.

Gibraltar was the place appointed as the rendez-vous of the philosophers. When Dr. Antrobus arrived there, he found that certain arrangements connected with the expedition would not be complete as soon as had been anticipated and he had a fortnight's spare time on his hands, which he at once determined to devote to a trip that had often tempted him—a visit to Sicily and Etna; so he took passage on board a vessel bound for Messina.

Take ten fine English sunsets, add an auroa borealis, mix in a dozen rainbows, well beaten up, and you may perhaps have the right colors on your palette, to depict the scene which Dr. Antrobus was enjoying as he sat in a small boat manned by two picturesque sailors, who cultivated long moustaches, and smoke cigarettes instead of chewing quids.

The sea was a broad sheet of exquisitely stained glass, without a wave or a flaw, and having a single jewel, shaped like a two-masted felucca, set in it. The mountains, swelling gracefully upwards till they culminated in Etna, looked too soft and ethereal to be true. Enchanted boundaries of paradise they seemed, which would recede if mortal man approached them. But the doctor, who had walked all over them, routing in tufa and scorice, knew better; he was also aware that all these fairy tints would become black with a rapidity unknown to more northern latitudes, directly the sun was turned down, and that, therefore, as he was more than a mile from the shore, it would be as well to go about. Just as he was about to give directions to that effect, however, he thought he saw a handkerchief waved, as if signaling him, on board the felucca, which was not above five hundred yards off. So he told his men to row up to her, and found, on approaching, that his surmise was correct: a lady, leaning over the bulwark, was beckoning him.

"Can I be of any service to you?" he asked when his boat touched the side.

"Oh, you are an Englishman!" exclaimed the lady, exerting herself to make her feeble voice audible. "Is it far from a town? Can you get me a doctor? I am so ill!"

For answer, Dr. Antrobus pushed his boat along to the gangway, and stepped on board; a couple of Maltese sailors, who were seated on the deck, forwards playing at cards, neither assisting nor hindering him. They merely gave him a keen look, and went on with their game.

The lady, though dressed like a young woman, was certainly past fifty, probably a good many years past; but some faces age sooner than others, and she was suffering.

"I am a medical man," said Dr. Antrobus; "what is the matter?"

"A burning pain that never leaves me, and prevents my sleeping; sickness whenever I take food; at times a dizziness as if I were dying."

"How long have you had these symptoms?"

"A month ago, at Naples. I first felt the burning, after sickness; but it passed off again at that time. Then it returned, and grew worse and worse. And you are really a medical man?"

"Certainly."

"Pardon the question; your coming is such a direct answer to my prayer! And you will save me, will you not?"

She became hysterical: when she got a little better, Dr. Antrobus helped her down into the cabin, where he expected to find some female attendant; but no; except the two sailors who were playing at cards on deck, and themselves, there did not seem to be a soul on board. Yet the vessel, though of Genoese build and lateen rig, was fitted up, like an English yacht, and as she was of about twenty tons' burden, her crew could hardly consist of two men only.

After certain further inquiries and examination, Dr. Antrobus asked if she had merely taken a passage in the vessel.

"O no," said she; "we have hired it, with the crew, and have been cruising about in it for upwards of three weeks."

"Then you first experienced these symptoms just before you sailed?"

"Yes: we had engaged the yacht, and made all arrangements."

"You say we; I conclude that the rest of your party has gone ashore?"

"Yes."

"Do you repose perfect confidence in all those who were constantly about you?"

"Tell me the truth, sir, I adjure you!" cried the lady, grasping his arm: "am I not—poisoned?"

"Yes."

The sufferer wrung her hands, and fell forward on the table at which she was sitting, in an agony of fear and grief. When this had passed by a little, she broke out into violent exclamations.

"Fool that I was," she cried, "to believe in his repentance, his returning love! To be talked over again by his soft tongue after all my experience! You asked if I have confidence in those about me, sir: there is only one about me, and he is my husband. I had confidence in him, God help me! though he squandered my money on his vices, and quarrelled with me when I re-

fused him more. But when he owned himself in the wrong, and promised to reform, I trusted him again, and came abroad alone with him, without a single attendant. And he has murdered me for my money—murdered me!—Ah!" she exclaimed, in a lower voice, as the splash of oars were heard, "he has returned. Say nothing of this to him, I implore you, or he will kill me out of hand. There is no Englishman on board; and these foreigners will believe anything he says, and do whatever he tells them."

"Calm yourself," said the doctor hurriedly; eat nothing but biscuit, drink nothing but water. I will apply to the authorities at Messina, and come to your rescue soon. What is your name?"

Before the lady could reply, a dark, handsome young man, dressed in yachting costume, sprang down the hatchway, and stood before them. It was not an easy task for Dr. Antrobus to suppress his feelings and treat this man unconcernedly; but he had determined in his own mind the wisest course to take, and he adhered to it. The new-comer had considerable command over himself also, for though he was very pale, and his lips twitched slightly, he put on an expression of indignant surprise as he bowed slightly to the intruding stranger.

"Pardon my having boarded you in this unceremonious fashion," said the Doctor. "I was deceived by the rig of your yacht, and thought it was some trading vessel, in which I might get a passage to Italy. This lady has undeceived me, and I have but to apologise for the mistake."

"Pray, do not mention it," said the young man, with an evident effort to steady his voice. "Won't you—Can't I offer you something?"

"No, thank you," replied the doctor cheerfully. "I must get on shore at once; it will be dark presently.—Good evening, madam."

CHAPTER II.

ETHEL'S SECOND CONQUEST.

Dr. Antrobus was a philosopher, and by no means easily flustered or excited; but his pulse certainly throbbed faster than usual as he was leaving the felucca. He had no doubt whatever of the truth of the wife's suspicions; that she had taken poison for some time back in increasing doses, he knew for certain; no suicide has ever been known to kill him or her self painfully, by inches, when speedier methods were at hand. There was no one about her but her husband; he had a direct interest in her death, being almost a lad, tied up to an old woman whom he had married for money, which she withheld; lastly, he had not yet quite stifled his conscience and to a student of physiognomy his face proclaimed his guilt.

Now, crime did not, as a rule, make the doctor's blood curdle; he was a little too apt to look upon it as a curious and interesting branch of social science, to be classified and experimented on, and treated as a disease rather than punished. But he could not stand slow-poisoning; that was the one sort of murder with which he had no patience. That a mortal being, framed like himself, belonging to the same species, having the same propensities, subject to similar emotions of love, pity, generosity, should be able to live on terms of daily friendliness with his victim, to soothe her fears with tender words, to profess anxiety, to watch the effect of the doses, and increase, diminish, or temporarily stop them in the way best calculated to prevent suspicion, was to him a horror which made the most brutal cuttings, stabbings, stranglings, mild and venial by the contrast.

In less than twenty-four hours his time was up, for the steamer which was to take him back to Gibraltar sailed on the following afternoon from Messina, which port was some ten miles distant by land from the small inn where he had been staying, and close to which he was presently landed. It had been his intention to go over in the morning, but he now felt that there was not a moment to be lost if the murderer was to be brought to justice, or his victim saved. Of the last, he had little hope—the poison had got too much hold of her already—still there was a chance. So he ordered a horse and guide, and packed his saddle-bags at once. In vain the innkeeper remonstrated: the roads were bad, and not entirely free from banditti. The doctor showed his pistols, and replied that he had a better chance of making his way past any people who tried to intercept him in the dark than by daylight, for that matter. Besides, it was a question of life or death, and he had no choice but to go.

Never had he felt so vexed and perturbed as during that gloomy ride; he was thoroughly dissatisfied with himself for not having made inquiries concerning names, relatives, dates, residence in England, etc., before her husband's return. True that he had had very little time, and the poor lady's illness and hysterical emotion had rendered the task of questioning her a tedious one; but still he fancied now that he might have gleaned more information. At present, all the clue he had was a presumption that the yacht had been hired at Naples. He had questioned the fishermen whose boat he had hired, and his landlord; but they knew nothing beyond the fact, that the felucca had come into the anchorage the evening before, and that the young Englishman had spent the day on shore with his gun.

His disquietude culminated when a puff of air, which at first merely breathed upon his face, strengthened and strengthened till he had to press his hat on. If the owner of the yacht had the slightest suspicion of what had passed in his absence, he would up anchor and away at

the first breath. Had he been over-cautious, after all? Would it not have been the better course to denounce the fellow to his face, and seek to carry off his victim? The attempt must have failed; four sailors had brought him back, which made a crew of six; he was armed, while the doctor, having no weapon, and unable to rely on the two fishermen, hired only for the hour to help him, would have been in the falsest position possible. No; he adopted the wisest, the only plan in seeking to keep the poisoner in ignorance that his crime was suspected until he could return armed with proper authority, and the power to interfere. And of this he had good hope, for he had a friend residing at Messina who was a man of wealth and influence.

The innkeeper had exaggerated the difficulties of the road, and in two hours the doctor reached his friend's house. He was welcomed very heartily, but his business was not so well received. "What! arrest an English subject on board his own yacht; take his own wife away from him, and accuse him of attempting to murder her! Many a town had been bombarded for much less. Then suppose the charge could not be substantiated?"

While they were discussing the matter, the captain of a British frigate which was cruising on the station came in, and when he was referred to, espoused the doctor's side. He saw perfectly that there was a chance of getting into a legal scrape, but agreed that it was worth some risk to save a woman from being poisoned like a rat, and said he was willing to take his share of it. The worst of the business was, that it was a hundred to one the yacht would be out of sight by daylight with that breeze.

There is no use in detailing how they roused a Sicilian official from his slumbers, and persuaded him to take action in the matter, for the captain's surmise was correct, and when the bay where the felucca had lain was visited in the morning, there was not a sail to be seen.

It was with a heavy heart that Dr. Antrobus started that afternoon for Gibraltar.

The house at Hawkshaw was dull for a long while after the owner left it. Dr. Antrobus, though a reserved and silent man at dinner-parties and tea-fights, which he hated, was a delightful companion at home, and his aunt and his ward missed him terribly, the girl most; for though Granny believed in her nephew to any extent, hers was a blind faith. Whatever he said must be right, and any one who averred the contrary was a wilful heretic, and wanted burning. But as for entering into the why or the wherefore, I do honestly think, without exaggeration, that such an idea, supposing the possibility of its getting into her head, would have turned all the brains. She did not even know the names of the sciences for which he was distinguished, or the societies which honored him. Ethel, on the contrary, studied the newspaper for mention of his name, read the reports of associations and meetings connected with him that she found there, asked him for explanation of what she did not understand, and, in a word, enlisted her reason in the service of her love and admiration. She could not hope ever to comprehend all, but she did a part, and might include more and more. Girls are generally far more intelligent than boys, but there can be no doubt that Ethel was very much in advance of her age. Her education had fostered her natural abilities. She had never been crammed; nor kept, against her will, to irksome tasks; nor snubbed when she asked questions; nor told that she must take this or that for granted because her elders affirmed it. Her father had made a little companion of her; never involving what he was about in any air of mystery, yet never bothering her with it unless she showed interest and "wanted to know." And Dr. Antrobus had fallen naturally into similar habits with the child, only his power of explaining things simply was far superior to Mr. Scaraby's. Indeed, he would have made a capital Polytechnic lecturer, if he had gone in for that style of business. Added to this, he was a big child himself, and enjoyed a game of the simplest character, or a fairy tale for its own sake, and not merely because it pleased his small companion. No wonder Ethel felt as if two-thirds of her interest in life had been swept away when her guardian left; and a considerable part of the remaining portion attached to the arrival of the mails. The doctor behaved well, and wrote on every opportunity, while Ethel was never without an epistle on the stocks.

The much-indulged girl found her masters with their regular tasks very irksome at first, but Granny, as she continued to call Miss Antrobus, discovered a sure method of keeping her up to the collar.

"How pleased Uncle Gregory will be if you can play Thalberg to him (or read Italian, or German or French with him), when he comes back."

So Ethel became an accomplished young lady, and her industry brought its own reward, for learning is only irksome when we attack it listlessly; for those who put their hearts into it, it is always a pleasure. Not that she was a recluse, entirely shut out from all the pleasures and amusements common to girls of her age. Hawkshaw was not a dissipated place, but people did meet at one another's houses, where the elders played whist, and their juniors less absorbing games. There was an archery club, too, of which Ethel was a member, and gained prizes (not a difficult matter, by-the-bye, for they had them for all shades of proficiency, and there were few blanks); picnic and nutting parties were not uncommon; an occasional entertainment, more or less dramatic in character, enlivened the town-hall of a neighbouring borough,

and formed an excuse for an evening's outing; and though the world would have frightened the leading houses into fits, for Hawkshaw was puritan, a juvenile party, where dancing formed the principal amusement, was not considered worldly. And the interpretation of the word juvenile was free. Then there was the honorable Mr. Trefoil, a lady with an aquiline nose, and other traces of former beauty; a fine woman still, though old enough to have once been a toast. While her husband, who was a Whig place-hunter, lived, she had held a conspicuous position in a somewhat distinguished coterie; and if Trefoil had only been able to take her brains about with him, his parliamentary career might have been a success instead of a failure. She coached him, indeed, admirably, but every now and then he rashly insisted upon having an opinion of his own, and that spoiled his prospects. So he got no return for the capital sunk in electioneering and dinner-giving; and died with his property so much impaired, that his childless widow was glad to retire from a world where she could no longer make much of a figure, to the neighborhood of quiet Hawkshaw. This dame having taken a great fancy to Ethel, showed civility to Granny, who was rather afraid of her, and insisted on calling her "My Lady." To Ethel, however she was merely a good-natured, friendly neighbor, who gave very pleasant little parties, and whose carriage was useful in the flower-show season. Beyond and above all, on two several occasions Mrs. Trefoil turned the gloomy midwinter into joy and gladness by carrying Granny and Ethel bodily off to London, and giving them a glimpse of (theatrical) fairyland.

Two years passed; the doctor still remained in Africa, and the last petals of childhood fell from Ethel; a fact which was first brought home to poor Granny by the intrusion into their peaceful life of a lover.

At one of the friendly lawn-parties given by Mrs. Trefoil in the summer months, there appeared a stranger, who fluttered the Hawkshaw dove, which knew only the coolings of two curates, an assistant-surgeon, and the second son of a neighboring squire, now an undergraduate, and intended for the bar, and who might be fit for the matrimonial market in twenty years or so, if all went well. Dudley was the stranger's name; he had no profession; dressed well; rode a valuable-looking horse; was tall, handsome, with very white teeth, and a very black moustache, and a certain keen expression in his eyes which always makes a man pass for romantic; above all, was single.

There were eight young ladies between the ages of seventeen and twenty-five at that little fête, and seven of them were immediately prepossessed in this Mr. Dudley's favor. The eighth, who shuddered at him, was Ethel, who had a prejudice against dark men, and thought there was something especially Mephistophelean about this one's expression. With the perversity which is so common in such matters, she was the only one who attracted his attention, and his admiration was so decided that almost all the people present noticed it. The fact was the more remarkable that Ethel was by no means the best-looking or the finest girl present; after knowing her for a little while, one thought her very pretty and winsome, but she did not strike people generally at first. True, that she was rather a good match, having no near relatives, and her property, when she came of age, being entirely at her own disposal. But how was an utter stranger to know that?

It is very rash to lay down general rules in such matters, but I think that a man of twenty-six or thirty, of good manners and a certain experience, could, being in earnest, almost always make a girl ten years younger than himself take him for a lover, provided she was fancy free. It is the old story of nature abhorring a vacuum, in the heart or anywhere. At any rate Mr. Dudley managed to talk Ethel's first aversion away that very afternoon, and the next time they met her only feeling was, that she was going to have an agreeable chat. Soon, whenever she went into company, she looked for him, and she seldom looked fruitlessly, for the young man rarely missed a chance of meeting her.

He had been asked to stay at Mrs. Trefoil's for a couple of days only, but when he left he did not go far. He possessed a few hundred acres in another county, and wished to farm them himself, if the present tenant, who was in a very precarious state of health, should die. It was therefore requisite that he should study practical farming, and for that purpose he took up his abode with Mr. John Higgins, a substantial yeoman, whose homestead was not a mile out of the village. But as the time of year was not favorable for the study of top-dressing and sub-soil draining, the agricultural neophyte had plenty of time on his hands, which he devoted to the cultivation of his neighbors. His attentions to Ethel became so marked that Mrs. Trefoil thought it right to call upon Miss Antrobus, and say what she knew of the young man. It was not much: he was a cousin of her late husband's; was pretty well off, though not exactly rich; and had been educated abroad, where his parents, who were both dead, had resided. Indeed, she believed that his mother was a Frenchwoman.

Poor Granny was dreadfully dismayed. "But, my Lady," she said, when she could utter, "Ethel is only a child!"

"Quite right, dear Miss Antrobus," replied Mrs. Trefoil, "you have the law on your side. But the law is very often opposed to nature and common-sense, and we cannot do any good by shutting our eyes to the fact, that our dear Ethel, though theoretically an infant, is practically a woman."

"But, my Lady, her guardian, Dr. Antrobus, is away, and nothing of that kind can be talked about till he comes back. O dear, O dear!"

But Mr. Dudley had no idea of pushing delicacy to the extent Granny desired. On the contrary, he was very earnest and persevering, and there did not seem to be any rational excuse for getting rid of him; he was of suitable age and means, conducted himself with propriety, and had been introduced by one lady who represented aristocracy at Hawkshaw. Several aggravating neighbors called upon Miss Antrobus, and congratulated her on the conquest Ethel had made, thereby adding greatly to her perplexity. "Would it then really be a good thing if the girl married this man?" she asked herself perpetually through several sleepless nights; and the only conclusion she could come to was, that there was something improper and shocking in the idea of an orphan young lady forming any attachment while her guardian was in Africa, and she was sure the right-minded Ethel would never do such a thing. So the subject was never mentioned between them until Ethel herself broached it.

I don't suppose that any girl had ever thought less about love and marriage than she had before Dudley paid his court to her, and so she was taken unawares. It was certainly pleasant to be appreciated; to meet with a fellow-creature who thought all she did perfect, all she said wise and witty; who, when in her presence, was in a state of rapt enchantment, when absent from her, wretched. He said all this, and she believed him; for what object could he have in deceiving her? Her power over this man affected her strangely; it certainly would not be a hard fate, she thought, to spend her life with a companion who was so very fond of her. If she had to marry, and most women had, it seemed, it would be certainly better to marry a man thus infatuated, than one who took a more commonplace view of her attractions and duties. And then, poor fellow, he would be so very miserable if she rejected, and so supremely happy if she accepted him, that it seemed positively inhuman to say No.

Not being a she Nero then, and Dudley driving her into a corner, she said Yes.

"O Ethel! Ethel!" cried Granny, shedding tears of distress at the news; "and Uncle Gregory in Africa!"

"Of course, Granny dear, if Uncle Gregory disapproves, there is an end of the matter, for I am certain he would not do so without good reasons; and he will come very soon now. Richard is going to call on you, dear."

"She calls him Richard!" cried Granny, and went into hysterics.

Dr. Antrobus was hardly less perturbed than his sister when he received the letter informing him of his ward's engagement. Absorbed as he had been by the congenial inquiries which had occupied him the last two years, his heart had constantly turned homewards with a yearning which grew stronger and stronger as the time for his return drew near. Of course, if the question had been put to him, he would have said that Ethel must now be a woman, and that he supposed she would soon be carried off by a husband; but yet he had never fairly recognized the idea; he associated her with everything belonging to himself and his home; indeed she was his home; for his aunt engaged his affections in a very inferior degree, and now he felt at first as if he had been personally robbed and injured. As, however, he was an eminently just and reasonable man, this feeling was soon quelled; and he resigned himself with a sigh to the inevitable. "Of course she would not remain a child for ever," he said himself; "she was sure to form new ties, and forget her old friend some day. Why, I am not even a distant relative. It is a mistake to love anything but science."

One November evening they were snug at Hawkshaw; the fire crackled, the curtains were drawn, the lamp burned clearly. Granny was engaged, as was her wont, in adding row upon row to a prodigious piece of network, the completed part of which was rolled up into an enormous globe. Ethel sat before a framed canvas upon which she was embroidering silk flowers. An open piano with music on it looked like a familiar instrument, not a fetch; and the books scattered about were likewise evidently in the habit of being read.

"Is Mr. Dudley coming to tea?" Granny asked.

"He said he would," replied Ethel.

A pause of half a minute; then said the elder lady: "How soon did you say we might expect him to arrive?"

Now, him was not the lover, as you might naturally expect from the former sentence, but Dr. Antrobus, who had announced his immediate return to England. Some girls, especially if much infatuated, would have answered crookedly; but Ethel knew where Granny's thoughts were, and was not much infatuated. So, she answered, looking up with animation this time: "The ship is due at Southampton on Wednesday, the day after to-morrow, and he might possibly come home the same evening. Oh, if ships were like railway trains, and arrived punctually, how nice it would be to go and meet him, would it not?"

"Yes; and yet, perhaps we should be in the way: there will be a great deal of luggage, specimens and things, will there not?"

"Oh, I could help him with that, or at least, I am sure I should not hinder him. But we cannot do it, for we might just miss him, instead of meeting him sooner."

"Exactly my dear," said Granny, much relieved; for she had once been on a quay when a vessel was unloading, and had been so bustling

and frightened, that she had not recovered her composure a week afterwards.

"Or else," resumed Ethel, "when you have been away for a long time, it must be very pleasant to see friendly faces the first thing when you—Who can that be?"

A carriage had stopped at the door, which was phenomenon sufficient to break off any sentence. Then there was a knock and a ring, and a footstep on the stairs. Then the door was flung wide, and a man, bearded, bronzed, and wrapped in an outlandish cloak, stood in the room.

"Uncle Gregory!" cried Ethel, running at him.

"It isn't William!" said Granny. "It can't be William!" as she looked at his beard. "It is William!" as the outlandish cloak was thrown off, and the shepherd's plaid trousers, and the tail-coat, and the shirt collar drooping on one side, came in evidence.

"And can this fine young woman really be the little thing I met in the churchyard; and who drew sixpenny cheques on the Hawkshaw bank without having a balance!" said the doctor, when the first greeting were over.

"I have developed, Uncle Gregory; that is all. But how nice and quick your ship has been; we did not expect you before Wednesday at the earliest."

"I have come overland," replied Dr. Antrobus. "After I had written my last letter, one of our party, a Frenchman, asked me to go on to Paris with him to give certain evidence which he wanted, promising that I should not be delayed in the long-run. And he has kept his word, you see."

If Ethel had thought of it, she would have quietly gone out of the room, and told the servant to explain to Dudley when he came what had happened, so that he might see the advisableness of not intruding upon the master of the house in the first moments of his arrival. But in the surprise and excitement she forgot all about her lover till he was announced, and then it was too late.

Seeing a stranger in the room, Dudley paused near the door, till Ethel said: "This is Dr. Antrobus, Richard;" when he advanced and bowed.

Dr. Antrobus did not return his salute. He had risen from his chair when the door opened, and now he stood erect, frowning, and surprised.

"Who is that man?" he asked, in quick commanding tones, such as neither Granny nor Ethel had ever heard from him before.

"That is Mr. Dudley," said the old lady, much distressed. "Don't you know? Don't you remember?"

"What are you doing here?" continued the doctor, not heeding.

"Sir!" said the young man, flushing red.

"What have you done with your wife?"

At that question the color faded out of Dudley's cheeks, and the anger out of his eyes. Ethel looked from one man to the other in astonishment; she thought her guardian had gone mad, till she heard the other's astounding reply: "I had—the misfortune—to—lose her," he stammered.

"Murderer!" cried the doctor.

Dudley felt the extreme folly of allowing himself to be cowed and confused; but the whole thing had come so suddenly upon him that he was utterly unable to pull himself together, even sufficiently for bluster.

"Is not one victim sufficient for you?" continued Dr. Antrobus.

"I don't know what you mean," said Dudley with an effort.

"Then I'll tell you. I have no wish to speak in enigmas.—Ethel, this man who had sought you in marriage has already had a wife. She was much older than himself, but she was rich; so he took her abroad, yachting; carefully got rid of all witnesses, and poisoned her."

"Who and what are you, who dare utter these calumnies!" cried Dudley, finding courage in desperation at last.

"I am the man who saw your victim in your absence, off the coast of Sicily; who met you on the deck of your own yacht when you returned—do you not remember me?—who would have saved her, if not too late, and brought you to punishment, had not the rising wind enabled you to fly."

"I did not fly; I left for change of air, because my wife was worse. She was not in her right mind; you were imposed upon by the ravings of a mad woman."

"God forbid that I should condemn any man unheard, however much appearances might be against him. But your wife was dying when I saw her, from the effects of a poison I can name, and that poison was in her foot. I secured a portion, and analysed it. Who attempted her life, if you did not? Who else had an interest in her death?"

"I—I do not believe she was poisoned at all. I—I—Prove it, prove your slander."

The doctor waited for awhile to hear if he had anything further to say, and then he raised his right arm, and pointed to the door.

"Out of my house, assassin," he said. "The vengeance of man may fall to reach you, but the justice of God is sure." And Dudley slunk from the house.

The doctor turned round; Granny was lying on the sofa in hysterics; Ethel stood erect, pale as death, and trembling in every limb.

"I would have spared you this scene, my dear child, if I could," said he, taking her by the hand; "but perhaps it is best as it is."

"O yes!" she replied. She had read Dudley's guilt in his face.

Dr. Antrobus found out the murdered woman's relatives, and communicated with them, and they desired to prosecute; but the lawyers de-

cided that there was no legal evidence, unless the body could be discovered, and as it had, in all probability been committed to the sea, this was impossible.

So Dudley escaped, and it was years before they heard of him again. But he had gorged the hook of the devil, who only gave him line for a time. The stings of conscience drove him to dissipation; dissipation brought him to want, want to further crime, and though he cheated the gallows, he was condemned to penal servitude for life.

All Hawkshaw knew of Ethel's engagement to Dudley, and the girl chafed under the general complacent sympathy, expressed or understood, so that her spirits and health suffered. The doctor observed this, and moved to London, where she in time got over the shock; but she was no longer the same for him. If it had not been for that two years' absence, he might have felt towards her like a relative to the end of the chapter. As it was, he, who had flattered himself that he was above such sentimental nonsense, fell in love with her. There could be no mistake about it; her figure pursued him everywhere, in the laboratory, in the dissecting-room, on the mountain-side. Worst sign of all, when young men made themselves agreeable to her, he felt a pang of jealousy; and when, as happened twice in three years, she rejected good offers, he felt glad, and not sorry.

At the end of those three years Granny died, and the doctor felt in a very awkward position; he did not know what to do with his ward, whom he was in love with.

So he cut the Gordian knot by tying another; I mean, that he married her.

It came about very simply.

"I wish, my dear, I was just twenty years younger," he said one day.

"Why?" Ethel asked.

"Because, then, we should be about of an age, and I could ask you to be my wife."

"I don't like boys."

"Wise girl. 'Better be an old man's darling than a young man's snarling.' There is rhyme and reason in the proverb, though snarling, as a noun, is a poetical license."

"The idea of your calling yourself an old man!" said Ethel, when all was satisfactorily arranged.

"Past forty, my love, past forty. Fancy taking the complaint so late in life!"

Ethel went to the piano, and sang:

Forty times over let Michaelmas pass;
Grizzling hair the brain doth clear.
Then you know a boy an ass,
Then you know the worth of a lass,
Once you have come to forty year.

Ethel herself is nearly forty now, and the doctor is sixty; and up to this date neither has once regretted what some kind friends called at the time their ill-assorted union.

SEA YARNS.

In 1809 Captain Lake, says an old sailor, commanding H. M. S. "Recruit," was dismissed the service for leaving a seaman, named Jeffrey, on the island-rock of Sombro in the Atlantic Archipelago, as a punishment for making free with some spruce beer intended for the captain's private delectation. Nine days the poor sailor spent, seeking shelter from the torrid sun, and finding none, and living upon birds' eggs and limpets, when he was rescued from his barren prison by an American schooner. Long prior to this, when St. Helena was unpeopled, a Dutch seaman, condemned to death for some offence committed on the return voyage from the West Indies, was put ashore there, instead of being hung at the yard-arm, the ship putting into the harbour for the purpose of burying an officer. The Dutchman, however, was no sooner left to himself than he opened the new-made grave, uncoffined his dead superior, carried the coffin down to the shore, and having launched it jumped into his strange boat, and by using the lid as a rudder, made his way across the waves until he overtook his ship, which, thanks to a calm, he was not long in doing. He was taken on board and received a pardon for his pluck.

I once heard of a horrible revenge taken on a petty officer, who was constantly in the habit of reporting men and getting them flogged. The vessel to which he belonged was chasing a privateer, a fast sailer, which had captured several merchantmen; and on one occasion, in order to get the ship in good sailing trim, gratings loaded with eighteen pound shot had been slung in different parts. One of these was over the main hatchway; and as the man in question was descending in the dead of the night, this heavy weight of metal was let down upon his head, crushing him like a spider.

There is a man now living in my neighbourhood, who was on board a brig in the French war; and, being an able seaman, was once set to look out on the bowsprit; it was on the coast of Norway. There came on a furious storm of sleet and hail, which so battered his face and eyes that he could not see (as he has told me) half a mile ahead, and then only at intervals. The commander by-and-by hailed my friend, and told him to come in, "as there was land, on the starboard bow." Now, the officer had the aid of a powerful glass, which also protected his eye, while the man was nearly blinded by the driving wind and sleet; still, for not performing an impossibility, the latter was ordered aloft to sit on the cross-trees for four hours in the most inclement season of that frozen climate. The result was that when the time had expired, he was fixed there a sitting statue, with every joint rigid, his flesh numbed, and without a particle of feeling left.

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We request intending contributors to take notice that in future Rejected Contributions will not be returned

Letters requiring a private answer should always contain a stamp for return postage.

No notice will be taken of contributions unaccompanied by the name and address of the writer (not necessarily for publication,) and the Editor will not be responsible for their safe keeping.

CONTRIBUTIONS DECLINED.

Queer Day's Fishing; A Wayward Woman; Christmas Eve on the Snow; Miss March's Christmas Eve; Love in Poetry; Delays are Dangerous: The Wrong Boat; Three Lovers; Poetical Temperance Tale; George Leitrim; The Mysterious Letter; Trial and Triumphs of Elizabeth Ray, School Teacher; Little Mrs. Rivington; Sentenced to Death; The New Teacher; Harris Lockwood; The Backwoods Schoolmaster; Mrs. Power's Lucky Day; Nick Plowshare's Fairy Story; That Emigrant Girl; The Phantom Trapper; A Romance of Poutsville; My Cousin Coralie; The Dying Year's Lament; Dawn; Improvisation; Skeletons; He Will Return; Susie; The Merchant's Reward; A Night at St. Aubé's; And Then; Blossom and Blight! Esther's Lovers; The Mystery of Boutwell Hall; Mount Royal Cemetery; Blighted Hopes; Minnie Lee's Valentines; Eva Hillmore's Valentine; A Tom Cat in the Breach; The Fatal Stroke; Only a Farmer; Meta's Broken Faith; How We Spend a Holiday in Newfoundland; Twice Wedded; John Jones and His Bargain; The Clouded Life; My Own Canadian Home; The Lost Atlantic; Gay and Grave Gossip; Lovely Spring; From India to Canada; Resurgam; A Railway Nap and its Consequences; Love or Money; For His Sake; Showed In; The False Heart and the True; Leave Me; Is There Another Shore; Weep Not For Me; Those Old Grey Walls; The Stepmother; Tom Arnold's Charge; Worth, Not Wealth; Miriam's Love; Modern Conveniences; Little Clare; Mirabile Dictu; Up the Saguenay; Ella Loring; Charles Foot; The Heroine of Mount Royal; The Rose of Fernhurst; Photographing Our First-born; Neskeonough Lake; A Midnight Adventure; Jean Douglas; The Restored Lover; Woman's Courage; A Story in a Story; Tried and True; Dr. Solon Sweetbottle; Second Sight; Eclipses; Geneviève Duclos; Our Destiny; Port Royal; Night Thoughts; Mr. Bouncer's Travels; Watching the Dead; Delusions; To Shakespeare; An Adventuress; The Wandering Minstrel; Spring; The White Man's Revenge; The Lilacs; A Trip Around the Stove; My First Situation; An Unfortunate Resurrection; Our John; Kitty Merle; History of William Wood; Willersleigh Hall; A Night at Mrs. Manning's; Won and Lost; The Lady of the Falls; Chronicles of Willoughby Centre; Why Did She Doubt Him; Jack Miller the Drover; Ellen Mayford; Recompensed.

These MSS. will be preserved until the Fourth of January next, and if not applied for by that time will be destroyed. Stamps should be sent for return postage.

The Age of Vulgar Glitter; Mrs. Seymore's Curls; To the Absent; By the Waters; Almoate; To a Lover; A Fragment from the Scenes of Life; The Axle of the Heavens; The Correct View; Apostrophe to a Tear; June; A Debtor's Dilemmas; Proved; Wanted Some Beaux; Canadian Rain Storm After Long Drought; The Murderer's Mistake; Yesterday; Carrie's Hat and What Came of It; Leonie Collyer's Error; A Memory Autumn.

These MSS. will be preserved until the Twentieth of December next.

THE MISTLETOE.

Our ancestors considered Christmas in the double light of a holy commemoration and a cheerful festival; and, accordingly, distinguished it by devotion, vacation from business, merriment, and hospitality. The custom of Christians decorating churches and houses with evergreens appears to have been copied from the Pagans. It is related that when Druidism prevailed, the houses were decked with evergreens in December, that the sylvan spirits might repair to them, and remain untripped with frost and cold winds, until a milder season had renewed the foliage of their darling abode. "Against the feast of Christmas (says Stow) every man's house, as also the parish churches, were decked with holme and ivy, bays, and whatsoever the season of the year afforded to be green. The conduits and standards in the streets were likewise garnished." "The custom of adorning windows at Christmas with bay and laurel (says Bourn), is but seldom used in the north; but in the south, particularly the universities, it is very common, not only to deck the common windows of the town, but also the chapels of the colleges, with branches of laurel,

these instruments found all over the British isles."

"The mistletoe was considered by the Druids to be a remedy for all diseases. Its virtues as a medicine were no less celebrated in later times, and it has been variously employed in epilepsy, in apoplexy, in giddiness, and other diseases. For these purposes the mistletoe of the oak was the most esteemed; and when this could not be obtained, that of the hazel. In modern times, however, its medical reputation has dwindled into insignificance; and the only real use to which it has been applied is the making of bird-lime. In this process the berries are boiled in a small portion of vegetable oil, and their glutinous properties render them well adapted to the purpose. Its chief employment, however, in the present day, is in conjunction with the evergreen and scarlet-berried holly, to decorate the houses during the winter months,—a custom which, as it appears from traditional accounts, has arisen from an old superstition that over the threshold where the holly and mistletoe are found, there no evil spirit dares to tread. We need not remind our readers that, in the halls of many an ancient mansion, and in the kitchens of our yeomanry—nay, some-

enkindled. There are two phases to Christmas. One where the heart is joyful in light of happy circumstances—with children and friends to enliven its coming, and old association to lend it charm amid scenes of grace and beauty; the other is where poverty, more chill and dreary than the weather, has settled down upon human prospects, blasting hope and banishing comfort, bidding the crushed spirit despair. Christmas is the season for benevolent wishes, and the two extremes meet in thought and act. The frost of winter enlarges the heart, and, opening with the expansion, the milk of human kindness gushes forth to comfort and bless. At Christmas time, amid the genial influences of the season, the disposition to do prevails, and generous performances attest the pressure of the generous principle. What a heartiness pervades the wish of Merry Christmas! It is no mere conventional expression that trips upon the tongue at such time, as though it were a thing to be ignored a moment thereafter, but it has all the ring of brotherhood in it and sincere affection—as if the sentiment were a more vigorous cropping out of a long-existing but restrained fact. We are glad to welcome the day, and say in the language of Tiny Tim, in his sweet and comprehensive prayer, "God bless us every one!" and in the fulness of the joy of the season we stand ready to extend our hand to all, and wish for happiness, with this and all coming occasions, on all mankind.

Christmas with the poor—with the real poor, who have no Christmas—should we pass a portion of our Christmas with them, we must bring all that makes the time joyous and happy with us. Why should we not from our plenty give them a little? Does not duty, does not the day itself, the day of Christ's nativity, demand this of us? Of all times this is the time to help the poor; this is the time to show to the world that the world is not all bad. Let us remember that, in proportion as we are gay, others are sad, starving, and freezing.

NEWS NOTES.

BAZAINE's sentence has been commuted to twenty years' seclusion.

MARSHAL Bazaine has refused to avail himself of the right of appeal.

PROFESSOR Agassiz died in New York at 10 o'clock on the night of the 14th.

No one was killed in the railway accident on the 12th inst., at Birmingham, England.

THERE is a report that the Duke of Edinburgh's wedding is postponed until February.

The *Virginus* left Havana on the 12th, escorted by a Spanish man-of-war for Bahia Honda.

SEVEN deaths from fever are reported on board two British ships stationed on the Gold Coast.

THE Carlists claimed to have gained another victory, though neither the time nor place of the battle is given.

THE troops besieging Cartagena have concentrated their fire upon the forts, and suspended the bombardment of the town.

THE *Virginus* has been fitted out as a national gunboat under the command of the officer who first boarded her from the *Tornado*.

THE excitement in Havana is subsiding; though the officers of the *Tornado* threaten to resign if the *Virginus* be given up to the Americans.

CAPTAIN-General Jovellar has issued a proclamation that he has received final orders to fulfil the promises made to the United States Government.

IN consequence of the late Republican successes in France, the Right have resolved, by an alteration in the Suffrage Law, to disfranchise some four million persons.

SPECIAL services have been held in Madison Square Church, New York, in memory of the Delegates to the Evangelical Alliance, who were lost aboard the *Ville du Havre*.

THE *Journal de Paris* says the unanimity of Bazaine's judges indicates that there will be no reconsideration of the sentence. President McMahon's decision may be expected to-day.

GENERAL Garcia at the head of 2,000 men has defeated a Spanish column, and also captured some large fortifications, making prisoners of the entire garrison, without firing a single shot.

THE fog which enveloped London, England, for three days and put a stop to traffic is the densest that can be remembered. It covered an area of fifty square miles, of which the metropolis was the centre.

ENGLAND has asked France to co-operate with her in instituting an investigation of the *Ville du Havre* disaster, offering to pay all expenses of witnesses. France cordially accepts, and promises the investigation shall be searching and complete.

THE late storm in England has done immense damage to property, and several lives have been lost through it. Sheffield seems to have suffered more than any other town, though the storm spread over most of the northern part of the country and far up into Scotland.

ABOUT 9 o'clock on the night of the 11th, Mr. W. B. Wood, Agent at Nashville, Tenn., for Adams' Express Company, had his skull crushed in and his safe robbed of \$4,200. Three of the men concerned in the affair have been arrested.

IN Congress Mr. Phillips, of Kansas, asked leave to bring in a motion embracing a number of resolutions on the Cuban difficulty, one clause being to the effect that the United States Government should recognize Cuban Independence. The motion was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.



"A CHRISTMAS BOX."

which was used by the ancient Romans as the emblem of peace, joy, and victory. In the Christian sense, it may be applied to the victory gained over powers of darkness by the coming of Christ."

The mistletoe (says Brand) never entered sacred edifices but by mistake or ignorance of the sextons; it being the heathenish and profane plant which was in such distinction in the Pagan rites of Druidism. It had its place assigned it in the kitchen, where it was hung up in great state with its pear-like berries; and whatever female chanced to stand under it, the young men present either had a right, or claimed one, of saluting her, and of plucking off a berry at each kiss.

The high veneration in which the Druids were anciently held by people of all ranks, proceeded in a great degree from the cures they wrought by means of the mistletoe of the oak, this tree being sacred to them, but none so that had not the mistletoe upon it. "At this season of the year (says Stuckley) was the most respectable festival of our Druids, called Yuletide; when mistletoe, which they called all-heal, was carried in their hands and laid on their altars as an emblem of the salutiferous advent of the Messiah. The mistletoe they cut off the trees with their upright hatchets of brass, called celts, put upon the ends of their staves, which they carried in their hands. Innumerable are

times also in the drawing-rooms of the learned and the wise, the mistletoe bush is still hung up to grace the festivities of a season in which families and friends are accustomed to unite around the social hearth.

The custom of decking our houses and churches with holly, etc., originates from ancient heathenish practices. Mr. Brand says that "holly was used only to deck the inside of houses at Christmas, while ivy was used not only as a vintner's sign, but also among the evergreens at funerals." Archdeacon Nares mentions, "the custom longest preserved was the hanging up of a bush of mistletoe in the kitchen or servants hall, with the charm attached to it, that the maid who was not kissed under it at Christmas would not be married in that year." In the north, a similar custom is observed, viz., that of kissing a maiden over a bunch of holly. Polydore Virgil says that trimming of the temples with hangynges, flowers, boughs, and garlandes, was taken of the heathen people, which decked their idols and houses with such array."

CHRISTMAS — Christmas — Merry Christmas — is with us once again, with all its hilarity and generosity. The sun rises on no day of all the year that is looked for with more pleasure than it. The old for reunions and happy memories; the young for expectations answered and hope

LOVE.

A fragile girl, who droops and pales,
Like a flower in sudden frost,
Clasping her wailing infant tight,
Shrinking away from her fellows' sight,
Like a wounded bird from the noonday light,
Its plumage all smirched and tossed.

Why? and they whisper of sin and shame,
And falsehood spoken in Love's pure name.

A grey old grange, with the ivy wreaths
Far floating from the wall
The thick dust drifting its floors to heap,
The spider across its doors to creep,
The flag-staff rotting upon the keep,
As the banners within the hall.

Why? and they speak of a forfeit pledge,
And their lord, who fell on his sabre's edge.

A youth, in the genius-peopled room,
That once his kingdom made,
His pencil broken, his canvass blurred,
And the music that once the heart-strings
Dashed right across with a passionate word,
Like the blood from a heart betrayed.

Why? and a common story was told,
Of troth-plight broken for sheen of gold.

A little child, with frank blue eyes,
And lips like flowers in dew,
Who wondered amid his childish play,
Why some should frown, some turn away,
While those who blessing words would say,
Wept 'mid their kisses too.

Why? the passion was past, the charm was
The poison was left for the innocent. [spent]

A wailing cry 'neath the sombre yew,
A sob by a lonely hearth,
Bright buds flung down upon quiet graves,
Where lush and green the long grass waves
And the dirge of the river's restless waves
Swells sad o'er the sacred earth.

Why? ah, who knows not how life is marred,
Where Death's strong hand strikes cold and [hard].

Love. Love forgotten, betrayed, forsworn,
Crushed beneath Death or time,
A due to every secret wrong,
A note, life's sadness to prolong;
A key, keen, magical, and strong,
To sorrow, or care, or crime.

Yet, priest and poet unite to prove
That "Love is Heaven, and Heaven is Love."

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PUBLICANS and SINNERS

A LIFE PICTURE.

BY MISS M. E. BRADDON,

Author of "Lady Audley's Secret," "To The Bitter End," "The Outcasts," &c., &c.

BOOK THE LAST.

CHAPTER III.—Continued.

Lucius closed the little book with a sigh. Alas how many a woman's life ends thus, with a broken heart! Happy those finer natures whose fragile clay survives [not] the shattered lamp of the soul! There are some fashioned of a duller stuff, in whom the mere habit of life survives all that gave life its charm.

This was all that letters or journal could tell the investigator. But Lucius told himself that the rest would be easy to discover. He had name, date, locality. The name, too, was not a common name; Burke's *Landed Gentry or County Families* would doubtless help him to identify that Henry Glenlyne who married Felicie Dumarques at the church in Piccadilly. These letters had done much for him; for they had assured him of Lucille's legitimacy. This made all clear before him; he need no longer fear to pluck the curtain from the mystery of the past, let he should reveal a story of dishonour.

He took some brief notes from Mr. Glenlyne's letter, and thanked Mademoiselle Dumarques for her politeness, promising that if the niece should profit by the use of those documents, the aunt should be amply requited for any assistance they afforded; and then he took a courteous leave of the dress maker and her apprentice, the monotonous click of whose needle had not ceased during his visit.

It was four o'clock in the afternoon when Lucius left Mademoiselle Dumarques. He had thought of getting back to Dieppe in time for that evening's boat, so as to arrive in London by the following morning—he had taken a return ticket by this longer but cheaper route. He found, however, that the strain upon his attention during the last forty-eight hours, the night journey by Newhaven and Dieppe, combined with many an anxious day and night in the past, had completely worn him out.

"I must have another night's rest before I travel, or I shall go off my head," he said to himself. "I am beginning to feel that confused sense of time and place which is the forerunner of mental disturbance. No; it would be of some importance to me to save a day, but I won't run the risk of knocking myself up. I'll go back to Dieppe by the next train, and sleep there to-night."

CHAPTER IV.

COMING TO MEET HIS DOOM.

THE passage from Dieppe to Newhaven was of the roughest. Lucius beheld his fellow voyagers in the last stage of prostration, and prescribed for more than one forlorn female on whom the sea-malady had fastened with alarming grip. The steamer was one scene of suffering, and Lucius, being happily exempt from the common affliction, did his best to be useful, so far as the limited means of treatment on board the vessel enabled him. The wind was high, and the passengers on board the Newhaven boat, who had never seen the waves that beat against the rock-bound coast of Newfoundland,

before the breeze, and in some spots, where tall shafts clustered thickly and crows were numerous, seemed in their vehement gyrations to be holding a witch's sabbath in honour of the storm.

That north-easter had a biting breath, and chilled the blood of the Shadrackites till they were moved to dismal prophecies of a hard winter. "We allus gets a hard winter when the heckwinocksshalls begins early," says one gentleman in the coal-and-potato line to another. And the north-easter howls its dreary dirge, as if it said, "Cry aloud and lament for the summer that is for ever gone, for southern breezes and sunny days that return no more."

Cedar House looked more than usually dark-some after the brighter skies and gayer colours of a French city. Those dust and smoke-laden old trees, lank poplars, which swayed and rocked in the gale, that gloomy wall, those blank-looking windows above it, inspired no cheering thoughts. There was no outward sign to denote that any one lay dead in the house; but it seemed no fitting abode for the living.

As the hansom came aground against the curbstone in front of the tall iron gate, Lucius was surprised to see a stout female with a bundle

But Lucius was not to be diverted by Brisbane emigrants.

"I don't think it was in our agreement that you were to leave your patient, Mrs. Milderson," said he; "above all during my absence."

"Lor bless you, Dr. Davoren, I haven't been away an hour and a half, or from that to two hours at most. I only just stepped round to my own place, and took the groshier's coming back. I'd scarcely stop to say three words to Mary Ann, which she thought it unkind and unmotherly, poor child, being as she has one leg a little shorter than the other, and was always a mother's girl, and 'prenticed to the dressmaking at fourteen year old. Of course if I'd a' knowed you'd be home to-night, I'd have put off going; but as to the dear old gentleman, I left him as comfortable as could be. He took his bit of dinner down-stairs in the parlour, and eat the best part of as prime a mutton-chop as you could wish to set eyes on; but he felt a little dull-like in that room, he said, without his granddaughter, 'though I'm very glad she's enjoying the fresh country air, poor child,' he says; so he went up to his bedroom again before seven o'clock, and had his cup of tea, and then began amusing of himself, turning over his papers and such-like. And says I, 'Have I your leave to step round to my place for a hour or so, to get a change of clothes, Mr. Sivewright?' says I; and he says yes most agreeable; and that's the longs and the shorts of it, Dr. Davoren."

Lucius said nothing. He was displeased, disturbed even, by the woman's desertion of her post, were it only for a couple of hours.

Mrs. Magsby had opened the gate before this, and half Mrs. Milderson's explanation had taken place in the forecourt. It had been too dark outside the house for Lucius to see Mrs. Magsby's face; but by the dim lamplight in the hall he saw that she was unusually pale, and that her somewhat vacant countenance had a scared look.

"Begging your pardon, sir," she began at once hurriedly, "I hope I haven't done wrong. I haven't forgot what you told me and my husband about not admitting nobody in your absence; but—"

"If you have admitted anybody, you have done very wrong," said Lucius decisively. "What does it all mean? I find Mrs. Milderson returning from a two-hours' absence, and you in a state of alarm. What is the matter?"

A straight answer was beyond Mrs. Magsby's power to give; she always talked in circles, and began at the outermost edge of the centre she wanted to reach.

"I'm sure, Dr. Davoren, I shouldn't have dreamt of doing it if it hadn't been for the order."

"Shouldn't have dreamed of going what? What order?" demanded Lucius impatiently.

"When first he came to the gate—which he rang three times, for my good man was taking a stretch after his tea, and baby was that fractious with the spasms I couldn't lie him down—I told him it was against my orders, and as much as my place was worth, being put in charge by a gentleman."

"Who came to the gate?" demanded Lucius; but Mrs. Magsby rambled on, and was not to be diverted from her circuitous path by any direct question.

"If the order haven't been reglar, I shouldn't have give way; but it was perfectly correct, from Mr. Agar, the house-agent, which has put me into many a house hisself, and his handwriting is well bekown to me. The gentleman wanted to buy the house of the owners, with a view to turnin' it into a factory, or works of some kind, which he explained hisself quite affable."

"That man!" cried Lucius aghast. "You admitted that man—the very man of all others who ought to have been kept out of this house—to prevent whose admittance here I have taken so much trouble? You and your husband were put into this house to defend it from that very man."

"Lor, sir, you must be dreaming surely," exclaimed Mrs. Magsby. "He was quite the gentleman, and comin' like that with the intention to buy the house, which I have heard Mr. Agar say as how the owners wanted to get rid of it, and with the horder to view in Mr. Agar's own handwriting, how was I to—"

"This house belongs to Mr. Sivewright, so long as he occupies it and pays the rent," said Lucius indignantly. "You had no right to admit any one without his permission."

"Which I should have ast his leaf, sir, if the dear old gentleman hadn't been asleep. Mrs. Milderson had took up his cup of tea not a quarter of a hour before, and she says to me as she goes out of this very hall-door, she says, which Mrs. Milderson herself will bear witness, being too much of a lady to go from her word, she says, 'Don't go for to disturb the old gentleman, as I've left him sleepin' as quiet as an infant.' And as for care of the property, sir, it wasn't possible to be more careful, for before I showed the gentleman over the place, outbuildings, and such-like, which he was most anxious to see, bein' as it was them he wanted for his factory, I calls my husband and whispers to him, 'Look sharp after the property, Jim, while I go round the place with this gentleman;' and with that my husband kep in the room where the chaney and things is the whole time I was away."

"How long did the man stay?" asked Lucius briefly.

"Well, sir, that's the puzzling part of it all and what's been worritin' me ever since. I never see him go away. But I make no doubt he went out the back way—down by them barges, as is



"UNDER THE MISTLETOE."

thought that shipwreck was within the possibilities of the voyage, and asked the captain with doleful countenances if he thought they should ever reach Newhaven.

It was late in the evening when the train from Newhaven deposited Lucius at London-Briggs. But late as it was, he took a cab, left his bag at his own door, and then went on to Cedar House. His first duty, he told himself, was to Homer Sivewright, the old man who had so fully trusted him, and so reluctantly parted with him.

As he drove towards the house, he had that natural feeling of anxiety which is apt to arise after absence from any scene in which the traveller is deeply interested—a vague dread, a lurking fear that although, according to human foresight, all should have gone well, yet some unforeseen calamity, some misfortune unprovided against may have arisen in the interval.

The night was cloudy and starless, cold too. The wind, which had been rising all day, now blew a gale, and all the dust of the day's traffic was blown into the traveller's face as he drove along the broad and busy highway. That north-east wind shrieked shrilly over the housetops of the Shadrack district, and one might prophesy the fall of many a loose slate and the destruction of many a flowerpot, hurled untimely from narrow window-sills, ere the hurricane exhausted its fury. The leaden crows that surmounted refractory chimneys spun wildly round

ring the bell. She clutched her bundle with one hand, and carried a market-basket on the other arm, and that process of ringing the bell was not performed without some slight difficulty. Lucius jumped out of the cab and confronted the stout female.

"Mrs. Milderson!" he exclaimed, surprised, as the woman grasped her burdens and struggled against the wind, which blew her scanty gown round her stout legs, and tore her shawl from her shoulders, and mercilessly buffeted her bonnet.

"Yes, sir, begging your parding which I just stepped round to my place to get a change of linen, and a little bit of tea and an odd end of groshery at Mr. Binks's in Stevedor-street; for there isn't a spoonful of decent tea to be got at the groshier's round about here, which I tell Mrs. Magsby when she offers uncommon kind to fetch any errands I may want. The wind has been that strong that it's as much as I could do to keep my feet, particlular at the corners. It's blowin' a regular gale. Hard lines for them poor souls at sea, I'm afeard, sir, and no less than three hundred and seventy-two immigrants went out of the Shadrack-basin this very day to Brisbane, which my daughter Mary Ann saw the wessle start—a most moving sight, she says."

Mrs. Milderson talked rather with the air of a person who wishes to ward off a possible reproof by the interesting nature of her conversation.

easy enough, you know, and him as active a gentleman as I ever see."

"You did not see him leave? Why, then, he is in the house at this moment," cried Lucius. "Why should he leave? His object was to remain here in hiding."

"I've been over every nook and corner in the house, sir, since he gave me the slip, as you may say, for want of better words to express it though too much a gentleman, I'm sure, to do anything underhanded, and so has my husband, up-stairs and down-stairs till our legs ached again. The gentleman asks me to show him the back premises first—his object bein' space for his works, as he says—and so I took him through the kitchen and round by the washhouse and brewhouse, and I opens the door into the back garden and shows him that, and I opens the outside shutters of the half-glass door leadin' into the back parlour, meanin' to take him through the house that way, when I looks round, after openin' the shutters for him to follow me, and he was gone. There wasn't a vestige of him—whether he'd gone back to the hall and let himself out quietly, havin' seen all as he wanted to see, and praps found as the place didn't meet his views, or whether he'd gone down the garden and got over the wall to the barge, is more than I can tell; but gone he was and gone he is, for me and my husband has exploded every hinch of th' ousee from garret to cellar."

"Did you look at that little back staircase I told you of?"

"Lor, no, sir; as if any one callin' hisself a gentleman and dressed beautiful would go in that hole of a place, among cobwebs and rotten plaster, and dangerous too I should think on such a night as this, with the wind roaring like thunder."

"Give me a candle," said Lucius; "or no, on second thoughts I'll go up-stairs without one."

He pulled off his boots and ran rapidly and lightly by the old staircase and along the corridor. He opened the door of the little dressing-room where Lucille had slept with a noiseless hand, and crept in. The door of communication between this room and Mr. Sivewright's bed-chamber stood ajar, and Lucius heard a voice he knew speaking in the next room—speaking quietly enough, in tones so calm that he stopped by the door to listen.

It was a voice which he could not hear without a shudder—a voice which he had last heard in the hut in the American pine-forest, that silent wood where never came the note of song-bird.

"Father!" said the voice, with a quiet bitterness keener than the loudest passion. "Father! in what have you ever been a father to me? Who taught me to rob you when I was a child? My mother, you say! I say it was you who taught me that lesson—you who denied us a fair share of your wealth—who hid your gains from us—who hoarded and scraped, and refused us every pleasure!"

"Falsehood—injustice," cried the tremulous tones of the old man; "falsehood and injustice from first to last. Because I was laborious, you would have it that I must needs be rich. Because I was careful, you put me down as a miser. I tried to build up a fortune for the future—Heaven knows how much more for your sake than for my own. You plotted against me, joined with your mother to deceive and cheat me, squandered in foolish dissipations the money which my care would have quadrupled: and for you, mind—all for you. I never acquired the art of spending money. I could make it, but I couldn't spend it. The man who does the first rarely can do the second. You would have inherited everything. I told you that. Not once but many times. I tried to awaken your mind to the expectation of the future. I tried to teach you that by economy and some little self-denial in the present you could help me to lay the foundation of a fortune which should not be contemptible. You, with your consummate artifice, pretended to agree with me, and went on robbing me. This was before you were twelve years old."

"The bent of my genius declared itself early," said the younger man, with a cynical monosyllabic laugh. The very note Lucius remembered in the log-hut.

"You lied to me and you robbed me, but I still loved you," continued Homer Sivewright, suppressed passion audible in those faltering tones of age. "I still loved you—you were the only child that had been born to gladden my lonely heart. I was estranged from your mother and knew too well that she had never loved me. What had I in the world but you? I made excuses for your wrongdoing. It is his mother's influence, I said. What child will refuse to do what a mother bids him? She confuses his senses of right and wrong. To serve her he betrays me. I must get him away from his mother. On the heels of this came a hideous revelation from you. You had quarrelled with your mother—you had taken up a knife to use against her. It was time that I should part this tigers and her cub. I lost no time—spared no expense—gave you the best education that money could buy—I who wore a threadbare coat and grudged the price of a pair of boots, even when my bare feet had made acquaintance with the pavement. Education, and that of the highest kind, made no change in you. It gave you some varnish of manner, but it left you a thief and a liar. I need not pursue the story of your career."

"The survey is somewhat tiresome, I admit, sir," said the prodigal, carelessly. "Suppose we come to the point without further recrimination on either side. You have your catalogue of wrongs, your bill of indictment; I mine. Let

us put one against the other, and consider the account balanced. I am ready to give you a full acquittance. You can hardly refuse the same favour to an only son, whom you once loved, who has passed through the purifying furnace of penury, who comes to you remorseful and yearning for forgiveness—nay, even for some token of affection."

"Don't waste your breath, Ferdinand Sivewright. I know you!" said the old man, with brief bitterness.

"Nay, I cannot conceive it possible that you should repulse me," replied the son in a tone of infinite persuasion. That power of music and expression which was the man's chief gift lent a strange magic to his tones; only a deep conviction of his falsehood could arm a father's heart against him. "I have made my way to you with extremest difficulty—indeed only by subterfuge—so closely was your door shut against me—against me, your only son, returned, as if from the grave itself, to plead for pardon."

"And to rob me," said Homer Sivewright, with a harsh laugh.

"What opportunity have I had for that? I only arrived at Liverpool from America three days ago. Why should I rob you of what, in the natural course of events, must be my own by and by? Grant that I wronged you in the past, all that I took was at least in some part my own, my own, by your direct admission, in the future, if not mine in the present; and could a boy perceive the nice distinction between actual and prospective possession?"

"You were not a boy when you drugged me in order to steal the key of my iron safe," said the father in a tone that betrayed no wavering of intention. "I might have forgiven the robbery. I swore at the time that I would never forgive the outrage. And I mean to keep my oath. I said then, and I believe now, that a man who would do that would, with as little compunction, poison me."

Ferdinand Sivewright was standing only a few paces from the half open-door, so near that Lucius heard his quickened breathing at this point, heard even the fierce beating of that wicked heart.

"From that hour I formed my life on a new plan," continued the old man, with a subdued energy that approached the terrible, a concentration of purpose that seemed fierce as the glow of metal at a white heat. "From that hour I lived but in the expectation of such a meeting as this. You left me poor. I swore to become rich, only for the sake of such a meeting as this. I toiled and schemed; lent money at usury, and was pitiless to the victims who borrowed; denied myself the common necessities of life, ay, shortened my days; all for such an hour as this. You would come back to me, I told myself, if I grew rich, as you have come; you would crawl, as you have crawled; you would sue for pardon, with hate and scorn in your heart, as you have sued; and I should answer you as I do to-night. Not a sixpence that I have scraped together shall ever be yours; not a penny that I have toiled for shall buy a crust to ward off your hour of starvation. I have found another son. I have made a will, safe and sure; not a will that your ingenuity can upset when I am mouldering in my grave—a will leaving all I possess away from you, and imposing on those that come after me the condition that no sixpence of mine shall ever reach you. After death, as in life, I will punish you for the iniquity that turned a father's love to hate."

"Madman," cried Ferdinand Sivewright, "do you think your will shall ever see the light of day, or you survive this night? I did not win my way to this room to be laughed at or defied. You have dishonoured me, have you? I'm glad you told me that. You have adopted another man for your son, and made a will in his favour. I'm very glad you told me that. I wish him joy of his inheritance. You have chosen your fate. It might have been life: I came here to give you a fair chance. You choose death."

There was a hurried movement, the swift flash of a narrow pointed knife, that kind of knife by which Sheffield makes murder easy. But ere that deadly point could reach its mark a door was flung open, there came a hurried tread of feet, and two men were grappling with each other by the bedside, with that shining blade held high above the head of both. Rapid as Ferdinand's movement had been towards the bed, Lucius had been quick enough to intercept him. By the bedside of the intended victim the two men struggled, one armed with that keen knife, the other defenceless. The struggle was for mastery of the weapon. Lucius seized the murderer's right wrist with his left hand, and held it aloft. Not long could he have retained the fierce grip, but here his professional skill assisted him. His right hand was happily free. While they were struggling, he took a lancet from his waistcoat-pocket, and with one rapid movement cut a vein in that uplifted wrist.

The knife dropped like a stone from Ferdinand Sivewright's relaxing grasp, and a shower of blood came down upon the surgeon and his adversary.

"I think I have the best of you now," said Lucius.

The old man had been pulling a bell-rope with all his might during this brief struggle, and the shrill clang of the bell sounded through the empty house, sounded even above the shrill shriek of the wind in the chimney.

Ferdinand Sivewright looked about him, dazed for an instant by that sudden loss of blood, and with the wild fierce gaze of a trapped animal. So had Lucius seen a wolverine stare at his captors from the imprisonment of a timber

trap. He looked round him, listened to the bell, caught the sound of footsteps in the corridor, then with a sudden rush across the room, threw himself with all the force of his full weight against the oaken panel. The feeble old wood cracked and splintered as that muscular form was flung against it, and that side of the room rocked as the panel fell inwards. Another moment and Ferdinand Sivewright had disappeared—he was on the secret staircase—he had escaped them.

Lucius made for the door. He might still be in time to catch this baffled assassin at the bottom of the staircase; but on the threshold he stopped, arrested by a sound of unspeakable horror. That end of the room by the broken panel still seemed to tremble; the wooden wall swayed inwards. Then came a sound like the roar of cannon; it was the fall of a huge beam that had sustained the wide old chimney shaft. That mighty crash was succeeded by a rushing noise from a shower of loose bricks and plaster; then one deep long groan from below, and all was silent. The room was full of dust, which almost blinded its occupants. There was a yawning gap in the splintered wainscot, where the sliding panel had been. Pharaoh had tumbled from his corner, and sprawled ignominiously on the floor. The huge square chimney, that ponderous relic of mediæval masonry, which had been the oldest portion of Cedar House, was down; and Ferdinand Sivewright lay at the bottom of the house, buried under the ruins of the secret staircase and the chimney of which it had been a part.

CHAPTER V.

"TIS WITH US PERPETUAL NIGHT."

They dug Ferdinand Sivewright out from under that pile of shattered brickwork and fallen timber, after labours that lasted late into the night. Help had not been far to seek amongst the good-natured Shadrackites. Stout navigators and stalwart stevedores had arisen as if by magic, spade and pickaxe had been brought, and the work of rescue had begun as it seemed, almost before the echo of that thunderous sound of falling beam and brickwork had died out of the air.

When Lucius rushed down-stairs he found the forecourt full of wind-driven lime-dust and crumbled plaster and worm eaten wood that drifted into his face like powder, and a clamorous crowd at the iron gate eager to know if any one was under the ruins.

"Yes," he said, "there's a man yonder. Who'll help me to dig him out?"

A chorus of eager voices rent the air. "Come, half a dozen of the strongest of you," said Lucius, unlocking the gate, "and bring picks and spades."

The men filed in from among the miscellaneous crowd of women and babies in the foreground. Stray boys, frantic to do something, were sent right and left to fetch spades and picks. The miscellaneous crowd was forced back from the gate, unwilling to the last; the gate opened and the men entered, at once calm and eager, men who had seen peril and faced death in their time.

"I knewed that end of the house would come down some day," said one brawny navvy, looking up at the dilapidated wing. "I told the old gent as much when he employed me to fasten some loose slates on one of the outhouses, but he didn't thank me for my warning. 'It'll last my time,' says he. Is it the old gent that's under the rubble, sir?"

"Thank God, no. But there is a man there. Lose no time. There's little hope of getting him out alive, but you can try your best."

"That we will," cried several voices unanimously.

The stray boys reappeared breathless, and handed in spades and picks through the half-open gate, which Lucius guarded. He didn't want a useless crowd in the forecourt.

"Now, lads, heave ahead!" cried a stentorian voice, and the work began; a tedious labour, for the wreck of the old chimney made a mighty pile of ruin.

The labour thus fairly started, Lucius went back to the old man's room. He found Homer Sivewright sitting half-dressed upon his bed, staring at that gap in the opposite wall, shaken terribly, but calmer than he had hoped to find him.

"Save him, Lucius," cried the old man, clasping Lucius's hand. "He has been an ingrate—a villain. There was bad blood in him, a taint that poisoned his nature—hereditary falsehood. But save him from such a hideous fate. Is there any hope?"

Lucius shook his head. "None, I fear. The fall alone was enough to kill any man, and that cross-beam may have fallen upon him. There are half a dozen men clearing away the rubbish, but all we can hope to find is the dead body of your son. Better that he should perish thus than by the gallows."

"Which must have been his inevitable doom, had he been permitted to finish his course," said the old man bitterly.

Lucius helped to remove his patient to Lucille's vacant chamber, and tried to calm his agitation—a vain effort; for though quiet enough outwardly, Mr. Sivewright suffered intensely during this interval of uncertainty.

"Go down and see how they are getting on," he said eagerly. "They must have cleared all away by this time surely."

"I'm going to look for a lantern or two," replied Lucius; "The night is as black as Erebus, and that strong wind makes the work slower."

Mr. Sivewright told him where to find a couple of lanterns.

"Go," he cried; "don't waste time here with me. Rescue my son, if you can."

His son still—by the mere force of habit, perhaps, although ten minutes ago his baffled murderer.

Lucius went out to the end of the house with a couple of lighted lanterns, and remained there moving about among the men as the work slowly progressed—remained giving them such help as he could—sustaining them with counsel—supplying them with beer, which one of the stray boys, returned for the purpose, fetched from a neighboring public-house by special license of the policeman, who acknowledged the necessity of the case—remained faithful to his post, until, in the dullest coldest hour of the dark windy night, Ferdinand Sivewright was discovered under a heap of rafters, which had fallen crosswise and made a kind of penthouse above him.

This accident had just saved him from being smothered by the fallen rubbish. The massive crossbeam of the chimney had fallen under him, and not above him—the long-loosened supports perhaps finally destroyed by that fierce shock which his own mad rush at the sliding panel had given to the fabric, weakened long ago by the unjudicious cutting of the timbers when the old banquet-hall was pulled down.

They lifted him out of the wreck, and, to the marvel of all of them, alive, although unconconscious. Lucius examined carefully as he lay upon a heap of the men's coats and jackets, pallid and bloodstained. Two of the men held the lanterns as Lucius knelt down beside that awful figure to make his investigation. Both legs were broken, the ribs crushed inwards; in short, the case was fatal, though the man still lived.

"Come indoors with me," cried Lucius, "two of you fellows, and we'll put down a door and put a mattress upon it; we must take him to the London Hospital."

Two men followed him to the house; they selected one of the doors in the back premises, an old washhouse door that hung loosely enough on its rusty hinges, and proceeded to unscrew this, while Lucius went upstairs for a mattress. A few minutes afterwards they had laid Ferdinand Sivewright on this extemporary litter, and were carrying him, loosely covered with a couple of coats, to the London Hospital.

There was a surgical examination by two of the best men in London early next morning; but as nothing that surgery could do could have prolonged that wicked life, the consultation ended only in the simple sentence, "A fatal case."

"Do what you can to make the poor fellow comfortable," said the chief surgeon; "it would be useless to put him to any pain by trying to set the broken bones; amputation might have answered, but for those injuries to the ribs and chest—those alone would be fatal. I give him about twenty-four hours. The brain is uninjured, and there may be a return of consciousness before the end."

For this Lucius waited, never leaving his post by the narrow hospital bed. It was important that he should be at hand, to hear whatever this man might have to say—most important that he should receive from these lips the secret of Lucille's parentage. All that care or skill could do to alleviate Ferdinand Sivewright's sufferings Lucius did, patiently, kindly, and waited for the end, strong in his trust in Providence.

"Better that he should perish thus by the visitation of God than by my hand," he said to himself, with deepest thankfulness.

He telegraphed to his sister, asking her to come to London immediately, and to bring Lucille with her. They were to travel by a particular train, and to go straight to his house, where he would meet them.

Painful as the scene would be to both, he deemed it best that both should hear this man's last words; that Lucille should be told by his own lip that he was not her father; that Janet should hear the truth about her unhappy marriage, from him who alone had power to enlighten her. It was to give to both a bitter memory; but it was to relieve the minds of both from doubt and misconception.

A little before the hour at which Lucius expected the arrival of Janet and Lucille, the dying man awoke to consciousness. Lucius at once resolved not to leave him. He wrote a few lines to Janet, begging her to come on with Lucille to the hospital, and dispatched the note by a messenger.

Ferdinand Sivewright looked about him for a little while with a dull half-conscious wonder. Then with that bitter smile which Lucius remembered years ago in the log-hut, he said slowly.

"Another hospital! I thought I'd had enough of them. I've been laid by the heels often enough. Once in Mexico; another time in British Columbia, when those Canadian trappers picked me up, half dead with frost-bites and with a bullet through my shoulder, a mile or so from that villainous log-hut, and carried me on to the nearest settlement. Yes, I thought I'd had enough of sick bed and strange faces."

Presently his eyes turned slowly towards Lucius. He looked at him for a little while with a lazy stare; then with a sudden fierceness in the dark fever-bright eyes.

"You!" he cried; "you, that sent that bullet into my shoulder! It must be a bad dream that brings you to my bedside."

"I am here to help and not to hurt you," answered Lucius quietly. "The end of your life is so near that there is no time for enmity. I saved you last night from becoming a parricide;

and afterwards helped to rescue you from a horrible death under the ruins of the house you had invaded. If it is possible for such a nature as yours to feel remorse for the past or apprehension for the future, give the few remaining hours of your life to penitence and prayer."

"What, am I doomed?"

"Yes, your hours are numbered. Medical skill can do nothing, except to make your end a little easier."

"That's bitter," muttered Ferdinand. "Just as I saw my grip upon the old man's board. I had schemes enough in this busy brain to occupy twenty years more. Dying! How did I come here? What happened to me? I remember nothing, except that I got into my father's house last night to have a little peaceable conversation with him. Did I see him? I can't remember."

"Don't rack your brain to remember. There is no time to think of your life in detail. Repent even at this last hour, and pray to an all-merciful God to pardon a life that has been all sin."

"Let him answer for the work of His hands," cried the sinner. "He gave me the passions that ruled my life—the brain that plotted, the heart that knew not compunction. If He has His chosen vessels for good and evil, I suppose I have fulfilled the purpose of my creation."

"May God forgive your blasphemous thought! To all His creatures He gives the right of choice between two roads. You, of your own election, chose the evil path. It is not too late even now to cry to Him, 'Lord, have mercy upon me a sinner!'"

The dying man closed his eyes, and made no answer. "I don't suppose I should have been a bad fellow," he said by and by, "if destiny had provided me with a handsome income, say ten thousand a year. The tiger is a decent beast enough till he is hungry. I've had a strange life—a chequered fabric—some sunshine; a good deal of shadow. You never heard of me in the United States, I suppose, where I was best known as Senor Ferdinando, the violin improvisatore? I was the rage yonder in my time. I can tell you, and saw the dollars roll in like the golden waters of Pactolus, and had pretty women going mad about me by scores. Ferdinando—yes, I was a great man as Senor Ferdinando."

He paused with a sigh, half regret, half satisfaction.

"I had a run of luck at the tables of San Francisco, when I got the better of that accursed bullet-wound—your bullet remember—and I didn't do badly at the diggings, though I gained more by a lucky partnership with some hard-working fools than by actual work. Then came a turn in the tide, and I landed in this used-up old country without a five-pound note, and nothing to hope for but the chance of getting on the blind side of my old father. But that was difficult."

"You contrived to rob him, however," said Lucius.

The dying eyes looked at him with the old keen gaze, as if taking the measure of his knowledge. But Ferdinand Sivewright did not trouble himself either to deny or admit the justice of this accusation.

"In England things went badly with me always; though I have played the gentleman here in my time," he muttered, and closed his eyes wearily.

Lucius moistened the dry lips with brandy from a bottle that stood by the bedside.

The messenger returned to say that two ladies were below in the waiting-room.

Lucius went down-stairs, leaving a nurse in charge of Ferdinand. He found Janet and Lucille alike pale and anxious. Lucille was the first to speak.

"Has anything happened to my grandfather?" she exclaimed. "Is he here? O, Lucius, tell me quickly."

"No, my darling. Mr. Sivewright is safe, at Cedar House. I have sent for you to see one who has not very long to remain in this world—the man whom you once loved as a father."

"My father here?"

"No, Lucille, not your father. Ferdinand Sivewright stole that name, and won your love by a falsehood."

"He was kind to me when I was a child," said Lucille. "But why is he here? What has happened?"

Lucius told her briefly that there had been an accident by which Ferdinand Sivewright had been fatally injured. Of the exact nature of that accident, and the events that immediately preceded it, he told her nothing.

To Janet he spoke more fully, when he had taken her to the other end of the room, out of Lucille's hearing.

"Your husband is found, Janet," he said.

"What?" she cried; "he is living then; and your friend Mr. Hossack assured me of his death."

Her first thought was one of regret that Geoffrey should have pledged himself to a falsehood.

"Geoffrey was deceived by a train of circumstances that also deceived me."

"He is living, and in this place!" said Janet, with a sigh for the man she had once loved.

"He is dying, Janet. If you want him to acknowledge any wrong done to you, it is a fitting time to obtain such a confession."

"I will not torture him with questions. I am too sorry for his mistaken life. Take me to him, Lucius."

"And Lucille, she must come with you."

"What need has Lucille to be there?"

"Greater need than you could suppose. Lucille's pretended father and your husband are

one and the same person. Come, both of you. There is no time to lose."

He led the way to the accident ward, and to the quiet corner where Ferdinand's bed stood, shaded, and in a manner divided, from the rest of the room by a canvas screen. His was the worst case in that abode of pain.

Lucille drew near the bed, and at a sign from Lucius seated herself quietly in the chair by the dying man's pillow. Lucius stopped Janet with a warning gesture, as she was advancing towards the screen.

"Not yet," he whispered; "hear all, but don't let him see you."

Janet obeyed, and remained hidden by the screen. Ferdinand Sivewright's eyes wandered to the gentle face bent tearfully over his pillow.

"Lucille," he gasped, "I thought you had abandoned me."

"Not in the hour of your remorse, father," she said; "my heart tells me you are sorry for your sins; for that last worst sin of all I know you must be sorry. It is not in nature that you should be remorseless."

"There are anomalies in nature," answered Sivewright. "I believe I was born without a conscience, or wore it out before I was ten years old. After all I have only sinned against my fellow man when I was desperate; it has been my ultimate expedient. I have not injured anybody upon fanciful grounds, for revenge or jealousy, or any of those incendiary passions which have urged some men to destroy their kind. I have obeyed the stern law of necessity."

"Father, repent; life is ebbing. Have you no words but those of mockery?"

She took his death-cold hands, trying to fold them in prayer. He looked at her, and the cynic's smile faded. There was even some touch of tenderness in his look.

"Do you think the God against whom I have shut my mind is very likely to take pity upon me now, at my last gasp, when further sin is impossible?"

"There is no state too desperate for the hope of His mercy. Christ died for sinners. The penitent thief had briefest time for repentance, none for atonement."

"I wonder whether he had been doing evil all his life; had never done a good action, never truly served a friend," murmured Sivewright in a musing tone.

"We only know that he had sinned, and was forgiven."

"Ah, that's a slight ground for belief in illimitable mercy. Can you forgive me, Lucille—you whom I wronged and deluded, whom I cheated of a birthright?"

"I do not know what wrong you have done me; but whatever that wrong may be, Heaven knows how freely I forgive it. I loved you dearly once."

"Ay, once. Poor parasite, why should you love me, except that it was in your nature to twine your tendrils about something? And I loved you, little one, as much as it was in my nature to love anything. Whatever love I had, I divided between you and the fiddle I used to play to you in that dusky old parlor, when we two sat alone by the fire."

"Father, by the memory of that time, when I knew not what sin was—when I thought you good and true, as you were kind—tell me that you repent your sins, that you are sorry for having tried to injure that poor old man."

"Repent my sins—sorry," he muttered.

"Well, I'll say this much, that if I could begin life afresh, with a clean conscience and a fair start, I'd try to be an honest man. Outlaws have their pleasures; but I think respectability has the best of it in the long run."

"The strongest proof of repentance is the endeavor to atone," said Lucius, who dreaded less the end should come ere he had learned all he wanted to know about Henry Glenlyne. "The wrong you did Lucille Glenlyne was a bitter one for you robbed her of a father."

"Lucille Glenlyne!" cried Ferdinand. "How came you by the name of Glenlyne?"

"Never mind how I learned the name. Your time is short. Remember that, and if you can be the means of restoring Lucille to her father, lose not a moment ere you do that one good act."

"An affectionate father," said Ferdinand, with the old mocking tone. "He was very glad to be comfortably rid of his pretty little daughter. He came to Bond-street a week after his wife's death, with the merest apology for a husband, lest people should ask him why he was in mourning, and took the little one on his knee and kissed her, and smoothed her dark curls, but never told her to call him father; and then, finding that she was so fond of me, proposed that I should adopt her altogether, and bring her up as my own."

"For a consideration, I suppose?" said Lucius.

"Yes, he paid me something of course—a sum of money down—very little—but he was always whining about his difficulties, and pretended that he could do no more. After that I lost sight of him altogether. I had left England before he came into his uncle's fortune, and when I wrote to him from South America, asking him to remember old promises, he did not answer my letters. When I came back to England, with some idea of hunting him up and making him pay me for my discretion, I heard that he was dead. He was a mean cur at the best of times, and was never worthy of his wife."

"Tell me at least where I can get most information about him?" asked Lucius earnestly.

"From the family lawyers—Pullman and Everill, Lincoln's Inn."

This was something. Lucius had set his

heart upon restoring Lucille's rightful name before she changed it for his own. A somewhat useless labor, it might seem in the abstract; but to an Englishman that question of name is a strong point.

"Is that all you can tell me—the only help you can give me towards reinstating Lucille in any rights she may have been deprived of through her father's desertion of her?" asked Lucius.

"Ay, that's a question that might be worth looking into. You'd better look at old Glenlyne's will. Henry married a second time, I know, but I don't know whether he had children by that second marriage. I don't see how I can help you. Henry Glenlyne married Felicie Dumarques at the church in Piccadilly—St. James's—just twenty years ago. I never had the certificate of the marriage. Hal Glenlyne kept that himself. But you'll find the register. Lucille's rights—if she has any under Reginald Glenlyne's will—may be made out clearly enough; provided you can identify the child I brought home to Bond-street as the daughter of Henry and Felicie Glenlyne. There's your greatest difficulty."

The man's keen intellect, even clouded by pain, dulled by the dark shadow of death, grasped every detail, and saw the weak point in the case.

"I am no fortune-hunter," said Lucius, "and were Lucille mistress of a million she could be no dearer to me than she is now: nor her future life happier than, with God's help, I hope to make it. I desire nothing but that she should have justice—justice to her dead mother—justice to herself."

"You cannot get it out of Henry Glenlyne," answered Ferdinand Sivewright. "He has slipped comfortably into his grave and escaped all reckoning. He was always a sneak."

"Enough. We must look for justice to God, if man withhold it. There is some one here who wishes to see you—some one you have wronged as deeply as you wronged Lucille. Can you bear to see your wife—my sister Janet?"

"What, is she here too? You come like the ghosts that circled crook-back Richard's bed at Bosworth."

"Will you see your wife?" asked Lucius quietly.

"Yes. She'll not reproach me now. Let her come."

"Janet."

Janet came softly to the bed, and knelt beside the man whose influence had once been all-powerful to lead her.

"Can you forgive me?" he asked, looking at her with those awful eyes, whose intensity was slowly lessening as the dull shade of death dimmed them. "Can you forgive? I wronged you worst of all, for I told you a lie on purpose to break your heart. You are my lawful wife—I had no other—never loved any other woman. I stole you secretly from your home because I knew my character couldn't stand investigation, and if I had wooed you openly there'd have been all manner of inquiries. I knew the keen prying ways of your petty provincial gentry. It was easier to make the business a secret, and thus escape all danger."

"You gave me a bitter burden to bear in all these years," Janet answered gently; "but I am grateful even for this tardy justice. May God forgive you as I do!"

She covered her face with her hands, and her head sank on the coverlet of the bed, as she knelt in silent prayer. There could be little to be said between these two. Janet's wrongs were too deep for many words.

Ferdinand stretched out his hand with a feeble wandering movement, and the tremulous fingers rested on his wife's bent head—rested there with a light and tender touch, it might be in blessing.

"Father, will you not say one prayer?" asked Lucille piteously.

"I will say anything to please you," he answered.

"No, no, not for me, but for your own sake! God is all goodness; even to those who turn to Him at the Eleventh hour. His mercies are infinite."

"They had need be if I am to have any part in them."

Lucille repeated the Lord's Prayer slowly, the dying man repeating it after her in Latin—the words he had learned in his boyhood when he went to mass with his mother at the chapel in Spanish-place.

They stayed with him all that day, Lucille reading, at intervals, words of hope and comfort from the Gospel—words which may have pierced even those dull ears with some faint promise, may have kindled some vague yearning for divine forgiveness even in that hardened heart. The sinner seemed at intervals to listen; there was a grateful look now and then in the tired eyes.

They did not fatigue him, even with these pious ministrations. The soothing words were read to him after pauses of silence, and only when he seemed free from pain. Lucille's gentle hand bathed the burning forehead. Janet held the reviving cordial to the pale parched lips. Had he lived nobly, and perished in the discharge of some sacred duty, his dying hours could not have been more gently tended. And thus the slow sad day wore on, and at dusk he started out of a brief slumber, with a sharp cry of pain, and repeated, in a strange husky voice,

the words Lucille had read to him a little while before:

"Lord—be merciful—to me—a—"

He lacked strength to finish that brief sentence; but, conscious to the last, looked round upon them all, and then, stretching out his arms to Lucille, fell upon her neck, and died there.

He had loved the little girl who sat on his knee in the gloaming, while he played by his father's bedside, better than the wife he wronged.

To be continued.

BIBLE SYNONYMS: THE NAMES OF GOD.

In some parts of the Old Testament, human representatives of divine authority are called Elohim. Moses in Egypt was to be "for Elohim" to Aaron, and was "appointed Elohim to Pharaoh." Judges are so entitled in Exodus xxii. and in Psalm lxxxii.; and probably it was in this sense that the word fell from the lips of the necromancer at Endor, when she saw a venerable form appearing above the ground, and exclaimed, "I see Elohim ascending from the earth." It is well to be reminded by this usage of speech, that the bench of justice is sacred. Judges sit not only as the exponents and executors of human law, but also as the pointers to heavenly justice, representing in their office Him who is "Judge of all the earth." Subordinate applications of the name Elohim to heathen gods or to earthly judges, are, however, only occasional in the Bible. Usually it is the designation of the Supreme Being, Maker and Ruler of all, and it implies and comprises all that is expressed when we say, "Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory." The word *Shaddai* is rendered in our authorized version, "the Almighty." In Genesis and Exodus, it is joined to the divine name *Eli Shaddai* is rendered "Almighty God." In later Scriptures, it stands alone as a divine name, and is so found 31 times in the Book of Job. Closely examined, the word indicates bounty, exuberance, all-sufficiency. And this is confirmed by its use in many passages. It was *Shaddai* that God was able to make his servants "exceeding fruitful." Eliphaz says to Job, "If thou return to *Shaddai*, thou shalt be built up: yea, *Shaddai* shall be thy defence" (Job xxii.). And Job recounts his own prosperity and happiness when *Shaddai* was with him (chap. xli.). Even when, in the same poem, we read of "the chastening of *Shaddai*," "the arrows of *Shaddai*," "the wrath of *Shaddai*," and "the heritage of oppressors," as a punishment from *Shaddai*, we still find the prominence given to the unsearchable and inexhaustible resources of God. Accordingly we define this as the title which expresses the Divine plenitude, including the faculty of government and punishment, but setting forth most prominently the riches of God's goodness and grace. The word is familiar to many English readers from Bunyan's allegory of the "Holy War," in which God the Father is named *Shaddai*, and God the Son Emmanuel—the former, the founder and rightful possessor of the town of Mansoul; the latter, its Redeemer from sin and from the tyranny of Diabolus. *Jehovah* is not a generic name like Elohim, or an adjective of dignity like *Shaddai*, but the personal name of the God of Israel. Twice in Exodus, and thirty-five times in the Psalter, we find it in the shorter form—*Jah*. And, indeed, it is a question among Hebraists whether the word we read as *Jehovah*, or *Yehovah*, should not be *Yavah*. The traditional points which give the vowel sounds are more uncertain in this than in other words, because the Jews will not pronounce the sacred name, usually substituting for it the word "Adonal." Unfortunately, in our authorized version, the proper name *Jehovah* is rarely retained, and instead of it, we have the generic term, "Lord." Thereby the force of many passages is obscured. Take for examples the contention of Moses with Pharaoh, and that of Elijah with the prophets of Baal. The demand for the release of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage was made in the name of *Jehovah*. The Pharaoh of the period was no Atheist. He acknowledged the Elohim of Egypt; but hearing the claim made by Moses, he asked, "Who is *Jehovah*, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not *Jehovah*." Moses gave him to know that *Jehovah* was the Elohim of the Hebrews; and by a succession of blows or plagues exposed the weakness of the Elohim of Egypt before the power of *Jehovah*, the Elohim of Israel. The issue was, that "*Jehovah* triumphed gloriously." "Who is like unto Thee, O *Jehovah*, among the Elohim?" Elijah expressed in his very name the great cause which he maintained in a degenerate age—that *Jah* was *Eli*, i. e., that *Jehovah* was God. The controversy which he brought to such a notable conclusion at the foot of Mount Carmel, was on this great question, whether *Jehovah* or Baal were Elohim, i. e., whether the God of Israel or the god of the Phoenicians where the true God. And this question was well answered, when fire fell from heaven upon Elijah's sacrifice and the people exclaimed, "*Jehovah*, He is the Elohim. *Jehovah*, He is the Elohim." Our version has, "The Lord," which is vague, and hides the point in debate. Other versions commit the same mistake. Instead of retaining *Jehovah*, the Greek has *Kurios*; the Latin, *Dominus*; the German, *Der Herr*; the French, *Le Seigneur*.—*Sunday Magazine*.

MY ONLY LOVE.

BY FREDERICK LOCKER.

My only love is always near,—
In country or in town
I see her twinkling feet, I hear
The whisper of her gown.

She foots it ever fair and young,
Her locks are tied in haste,
And one is o'er her shoulder flung,
And hangs below her waist.

She ran before me in the meads;
And down this world-worn track
She leads me on; but while she leads,
She never gazes back.

And yet her voice is in my dreams,
To witch me more and more;
That wooing voice! Ah me it seems
Less near me than of yore.

Lightly I sped when hope was high,
And youth beguiled the chase,—
I follow, follow still; but I
Shall never see her face!

THE MAJOR'S LUNCHEON.

AN OVER TRUE TALE.

It was a bright sunny day in July, and although people seemed to find it hot, yet to me the atmosphere had only just the chill off, for I was lately home from a lengthened sojourn in Bombay. I had been to the India Office to see one of the officials on a little matter of detail connected with my furlough, and I had two or three hours to spare before my train—I live at Sevenoaks, and had a return ticket by the London, Chatham, and Dover—was due to start, and I didn't exactly know how to employ the time. I strolled across the Parade, ascended the steps by the Duke of York's Column, stood and stared at the statue they have just put up of Outram; horse standing on three legs, and Outram looking back, leaning on the flank of his horse. Well, I hadn't much fault to find with the statue, except, perhaps, as to the horse being a little heavy, and that I'd have made him splashing out with his near fore leg, seeing that his rider's leaning over the off flank; but, notwithstanding, it's a spirited thing, and that's a good deal to say in these days. When I'd had a good look at Outram I turned into Pall-mall, and took a long stare at the print-shops, and then I sauntered along the Opera colonnade, a fragrant whiff of some cooking going on at the restaurant there making me all of a sudden feel as if I was hungry.

Perhaps you will say that I was in the right quarter to be satisfied; but I didn't feel so. I am, like John Gilpin, of a frugal mind. I haven't tolled all these years in a foreign land under a blazing sun to dissipate my modest hoard on cooks and restaurateurs; moreover, my appetite is a masculine one, and is not to be appeased by cutlets as big as half-crowns. Should I take the "bus" to Paddington, and lunch with my sister Emily? Paddington is a long way, Emily as likely as not would be out, and if at home she would probably be lunching off cream-cheese and Osborne biscuits, and a glass of Gladstonian claret. Should I retreat to my station, and refresh myself calmly at the dining-room there and await my train? There was something ignominious in the idea. Here was I in one of the most wonderful cities in the world, and all I could find it in my heart to do was to get out of it as quickly as possible.

Irresolute I stood at the corner of the Haymarket, not having made up my mind which way to go. I hadn't stood there a second before an old Irishwoman asked me the way to Bethnal-green. I was rather flurried at this, as, although I have a good general idea of the direction of Bethnal-green, I found it difficult to methodise it with sufficient rapidity for the old Irishwoman, who gave me a glance of contempt and passed on. Before I had recovered from this, two very nice-looking girls, moved, I suppose, by my fatherly appearance, besought me, with charming smiles, to direct them to the Academy. Now in my young days the Academy used to be at the National Gallery, and although I ought to have known very well that it was now at Burlington House, yet I had somehow never realised the fact, and so I sent off these two very nice young creatures entirely in the wrong direction. My heart smote me the next moment, and I was about to rush across the street to stop them and put them in the right way when I was seized by a florid young Irishman, with all the superfluous energy and fluency of his country, who insisted on my directing him to the Chief Commissioner of the Civil Service, and was very angry with me when I assured him that there was no such functionary. He insisted in producing an official envelope addressed to Michael O'Donovan, Esq., at some howling wilderness in Tipperary, which certainly bore in the corner the words, "Civil Service Commissions."

"And would there be a Commission without a Commissioner?" cried Michael triumphantly but scornfully; and then I saw what he wanted of course, and sent him off to Dean's yard; but I didn't know, after all, whether he wouldn't have committed an assault upon me with the idea he'd got that I was "desaving" him. I

hope to goodness the Civil Service Commission hasn't moved too, or I shall fear to find my tall Irish friend waiting for me at the corner of the Haymarket with a big stick next time I pass.

But next minute I was paid for all, when such a sweet voice fell upon my ear, and a lady with a little boy in her hand asked me the way to Regent-street. She had one of those softly-moulded sympathetic faces that give one a heart-ache when one finds that the owners of them are married, not with any idea of selfish appropriation, but with the thought that such sweet candid creatures should be set apart for the love and adoration of all mankind, and not monopolised by some one unworthy wretch. She asked me the way to Regent-street, and happy was I that I knew it. After that I deserted my post and darted across to the other side.

I hadn't got more than half a dozen yards when I felt a hand laid upon my arm, and saw at my side a very good looking, well-dressed man.

"My dear fellow," he said, "how are you?" I didn't know but what I knew the man, for one meets so many people of his kidney; and, for aught I could tell, I might have been hospitably entertained by him somewhere or other up the country, so that I didn't like to confess my ignorance of his name and quality. And we walked very cordially together towards St. Martin's Church.

"When was the last time we met?" said my new friend. "Surely at the Governor-General's ball at Calcutta."

"Never was at Calcutta in my life," I said; "mine's the Bombay Presidency."

"And I've been taking you all this time for Colonel Scoop. Is it possible that I'm deceived?"

I always feel, with the least degree of soreness when in England, that my friends in the military branch have somewhat the pull over us civilians in matter of titles; but in India "collector" is a very much more important title than colonel, but people don't seem to understand that, and set us on a level with the tax-gatherer. Thus it was with a slight degree of acerbity I replied that I was no colonel at all, but a mere civil servant.

"Most wonderful!" cried my friend. "Never was such an extraordinary resemblance. Pardon the unconscious liberty I've taken."

Well, we were very polite to one another, and asked after this man and the other, whom, perhaps, we might both know, and got quite thick together. Major Bilkins, it appeared, was the man's name; he was a nice, agreeable fellow, and we walked on together in a very amicable way. Bilkins hoped I'd come and look him up at his little place in Surrey, and I gave him my card and said I'd be glad to see him at Sevenoaks.

"And what are you going to do now?" said the Major. "Come and lunch with me at the Oriental."

Now, there are six or seven men to whom I've a deadly hatred who lunch at the Oriental daily, besides which one gets quite enough of the Orient in India, and so I told him.

"Quite right," he said; "I like to get out of the regular groove. What do you say to going into the City and having a bit of fish together? I know a capital place, Chuffin's, close to Billingsgate, and handy for our trains. Take the penny boat from Hungerford, eh?"

I willingly agreed to this, for I like to make the acquaintance of new phases of life under competent guidance, although I haven't enterprise enough to cut out anything of the kind for myself.

The tide was well up, and we had a pleasant sail down the river. There is no more charming vista than that from Hungerford-bridge. The Embankment makes a handsome sweep just there, and the bridge of Waterloo, surely the handsomest bridge in England, and Somerset House, and St. Paul's looming over all; but lower down the Embankment gives a sadly tame and formal aspect to the river. A stone wall, accentuated with lamp-posts and door-knockers, is an unworthy monument of British taste. You might have taken a hint from the Hindoo ghauts, or landing-places, to advantage.

We landed close to London-bridge, and the Major introduced me to Chuffin's. A very nice place, with an ordinary and a regular chairman, and characters that if I were one of your pen-and-ink artists, I should have great pleasure in sketching for you. We had no end of fish of the very best. But the Major seduced me into extravagance. A pint of champagne with our fish, some brown sherry, and, to wind up, some capital iced punch, an iniquitous sort of proceeding for a man who had a family dinner awaiting him at seven; but I got into the spirit of the thing somehow, and the Major's conversation was really quite bright and entralling.

"I must leave you now," said the Major, calling the waiter and picking out a ninepenny cigar. He took a handful of change out of his pocket. "You'll allow me to settle for this little affair?"

"Couldn't think of it," I said warmly; "not on any account."

"O, nonsense! Well, I won't press it," he said, seeing I was determined. "Let's see, two-and-six, five, seven-and-six, and six for the waiter, eight shillings a-piece; 'shall I settle?'"

"Do, if you please," I said, handing my friend half a sovereign.

The Major gave me a two-shilling piece and lounged away to the little desk, where they took the money, made his financial arrangements, and vanished with a parting wave of the hand.

For myself I confess that I felt a little mud-

died with the good things of which I had partaken. I ordered a brandy-and-soda and screw of tobacco, and indulged in a long clay pipe—a thing I very much affect when I have a chance.

Presently, as the time for my train approached, I knocked out the ashes of my pipe and made my way to the door.

"I have to pay for a brandy-and-soda and tobacco," I said.

"Yes, sir," said the waiter, who hovered about to check off the payers, "and two dinners, champagne, sherry, punch—eighteen shillings, if you please, sir."

"But," I remonstrated, "my friend paid for all that."

"I beg your pardon, sir," said the young woman at the desk; "he left word, sir, that you would settle for everything."

Well, they wouldn't let me go without paying, and I went home rather crestfallen. I wrote to Major Bilkins, at Bickley Park, Surrey, but my letter came back in due course marked in red and other colored inks all over it, "Not known; try—" ever so many places.

O, Major Bilkins, I didn't mind so much paying for you feed and giving you a little pocket-money, but it was rather too bad to hand me for change out of my half-sovereign a florin that proved to be a "duffer."

Why two Christmases came in one year.

"Kriss! Kriss!" called Mrs. Santa Claus, as she went out of the house and across the yard. "Now I do wonder where that boy is," she added, looking behind the iceberg that stood like a great frosted hay-rick just in front of the stable door. Kriss was very fond of playing there with his little white bear; but neither boy nor bear was now to be seen. She then peeped into the stable, and saw the reindeer in their stalls, but no Kriss was there. "Well," she thought, as she turned back, "he can't be far away, and the smell of supper will certainly bring him home." Just as she was going in the door she saw the bear trotting clumsily but quickly off toward the north pole, which is in sight of the house. She went in then, quite easy, for she knew the boy must be somewhere near; and cutting two fine, juicy seal-steaks off the seal in the pantry, she freshened up her fire, and prepared to cook supper. Mrs. Santa Claus never permitted her family to become hungry. They always had four meals a day; but Kriss, who was growing, and needed more food, had his two lunches besides. It certainly was a great pity that neither Sir John Franklin nor Dr. Kane ever happened upon Santa Claus when they explored the polar region. He is much more hospitable than the Esquimaux, and would have been glad to have entertained and helped them. His visiting circle is so very small that to see a stranger is quite an event, and there would have been no limit to the kindness he would have shown them. "Mrs. Santa Claus goes out still less than her husband; so, although she is obliged to have several new dresses every year, she is never worried by any change in the fashion. In fact, she cuts the clothes for the whole family just alike. When Santa Claus brings home the skins from his grand hunts, she sorts them into three piles. The largest is for Santa Claus, the next for herself, and the little one do for Kriss. When the three are together, they are a comical-looking family, for except in size, there is no difference in them. Another odd thing about them is, that they have but the one name in common. This became very confusing after the child became old enough to run about, as old Santa Claus would often answer the mother's call for the boy, perhaps leaving a toy half finished, and the glue cooling. He finally decided that it would be best to nickname the young Santa, and call him "Kriss Kringle"—a title he himself is known by among the Pennsylvania Dutch. After this there was no farther trouble about names.

But to come back to Kriss upon this particular evening. He was by no means even as far away as his mother had thought, for he had not only seen her, but also had heard her speak. But if she had known where he was, he would have made a quick march out. Over the stable there was a large room, neatly fitted up with shelves and boxes, where Santa Claus kept all his finished toys. Kriss was never allowed to go there without his father; but here he was now, busy as he could be. He was not, as you may perhaps think, playing with the toys, for he did not care for them now; he had had so many, and knew all the secrets about them. He had even helped his father put the squeak into the dogs and pigs, and knew just how the strings must be put into harlequins if they were to jump properly, and how the jugglers and magic lanterns were made, and so was tired of them all. He had just now, however, handled them very extensively, and was still engaged in the same occupation. He had taken out his father's great leather bags, and was busy filling them up with anything that came nearest to hand. As every thing in the room was finished in good style for Christmas, he had, in spite of his lack of choice, made a pretty collection. His idea in doing this can be very simply explained. It was now near Christmas-time, and there was much excitement and business in the Santa Claus domicile. Santa Claus was hurried with some extra vanishing; and between dressing dolls, making candy and candy bags, and seeing

that the Noah's arks and the menageries were all properly assorted, Mrs. Santa Claus never went to bed until after twelve o'clock. Little Kriss was, however, a looker-on in this excitement. His parents thought him too little to work, and he did not care to play. Still he wanted a share in the bustle; and the night before, as he lay in his little trundle-bed watching his mother tie sashes upon a whole row of dolls—for she had the latest fashions for them, if not for herself—a bright idea occurred to him. What he wanted to do was to go with his father Christmas-eve to carry the presents to the children; but he knew this would not be permitted. The year before he had accomplished it, for he hid himself among the bags and buffalo-ropes in the sledge, and his father never found him until they reached Vermont, and then it was too late to turn back. But there was no hope for him this Christmas, for he knew the sledge would be well searched before his father started. Still he did not despair; and as he lay in his bed this night it flashed across his mind that he might take the deer and sleigh some night before the Christmas and have a little trip of his own. He was now acting upon this idea; and so, when he had finished packing the bags, and preparing every thing necessary, he smelled the seal-steaks cooking, and, coming out of the stable, went into the house.

His mother was now busy making a walrus hash—for they always had two dishes of meat on the table—and only glanced up to see that he was all safe and right. Soon supper was ready, and the father called in; but although Kriss had but little appetite, he managed, between what he ate and what he stealthily put in his pocket for a midnight lunch, to satisfy his mother. After supper was over his father delighted him by saying that the work was now so nearly done that he thought they might all go to bed early and take a good night's rest. Mrs. Claus rubbed her eyes, and said she would be very glad to do so; and Kriss hypocritically rubbed his also, but truthfully remarked that the sooner they all went to bed the better he would like it.

It was, however, ten o'clock before they were all in bed, and almost eleven before Kriss thought it safe to start. He had some trouble, too, with the deer! For Vixen, the off-deer, would not let him harness her for some time, and then, just as he was ready to start, he found that Dancer's harness was too tight. However, after some work he made every thing ready, lugged down the bags; packed them safely with the tops up, buttoned up his little seal-skin overcoat, drew on his fur gloves, and was off. He drove directly southeast for a time, then turned south, and passed close by the shore of Hudson Bay, and crossed the St. Lawrence and stopped in Troy, New York. Here he selected a house with a good wide chimney, took out a wax doll, a curly dog, and a candy tiger, and jumped out of the sleigh. It occurred to him at that moment that perhaps there were no children in that house. His father always knew, but how he knew Kriss could not think. Suddenly he remembered that his mother had said that there was warmth in the house where children dwelt; so he laid down the toys, took off his glove, and felt the roof, but it was icy cold. He then jumped into the sledge and drove on, stopping on several roofs to try them, but they were all cold. This, it was plain, was not the way to find out. He then thought he would go down the chimneys and look for the children. At the next house he accordingly left his toys in the sledge, jumped out, sprang down the chimney, and found himself in a large room, where a little baby lay asleep in a crib, and her mother near her in a big bed. He then went back, and getting the toys, laid them beside her. But he found that going on such exploring expeditions first was rather tedious work. His father always strapped a bag on his back, as every one knows, but they were all too big for Kriss to carry, so he filled his pockets with little things, stuck as many as possible in his belt, strung some around his neck, and so dressed up, jumped down many and many a chimney.

He was just going to step into his sledge, after many hours of busy work, when he happened to glance up at the sky, and saw that it was nearly day. He had intended going farther, but now had no time. He took out all his toys—but they were almost all gone—placed what he had on a good straight roof, close to the chimney, whipped up his deer, and galloped home. He had expected to have reached home before his parents had awakened, but although he took a short-cut home, he saw the smoke curling up through the keen morning air before he saw the house, and so knew that his mother certainly was up. He managed to drive quietly into the stable, and had just unharnessed the deer, and was about to give them some moss, when a shadow darkened the door; he looked up, and there stood his father! Kriss did not feel very comfortable, but his only course was plain; he followed the never-forgotten example of George Washington under somewhat similar circumstances, and owned up. The only reply Santa Claus made was to tell him to come into the house and get his breakfast. After the meal was over they all sat down around the fire, and little Kriss had to give a full account of his adventures. After he had finished his story, to which his parents listened in perfect gravity, they sent him out to feed the tame bears and walrus, while they talked the subject over. Mrs. Claus sat on one side of the fire-place, Santa Claus on the other. They were silent for a moment; then he looked at her, she looked back at him, and then they both laughed. It certainly was very funny to them, but it would not do to let him go unpunished, or he would

travel off whenever he pleased, and perhaps make Christmases once a month. It was easy enough to find something to whip him with, for Santa Claus had some every fine switches all ready for the stockings of bad children; but he never succeeded in inflicting this punishment, for as soon as Kriss began to cry—and he generally started as soon as he saw the switch—his mother always ran and took him away. This being out of the question, after much discussion they concluded to make him keep up the fire in the cave of ice for three months. Santa Claus used to make his glue there, and do various odd jobs that Mrs. Claus did not like done at the shop; and as the fire had to be kept up regularly and so needed wood every day, they knew it would be a severe punishment to Kriss, as he hated stated tasks.

But when this sentence was carried into execution it was found that Kriss was bright enough to make fun out of it. He determined, it seemed, that if he had to make fires, they should be big ones; and he piled on the wood until it could be heard crackling and roaring clear to the north pole. The reflection was often seen in the United States, and it set all the learned men to wondering why there should be so many displays of the aurora borealis that year. If they had only known that they were caused by Kriss heaping pine wood upon his father's fire, it would have saved much trouble and more talking.

But the consequences of Kriss's frolic did not stop here. When the people whose houses he visited arose the next morning, they were astonished to find the presents in their rooms. Some of them thought that there must be a new fashion regarding the time for Christmas gifts. Others thought they must have made a mistake in the date. One old lady was so flustered that she ran down into the yard and killed her Christmas turkey with her own hands, she was so afraid that it would not be done in time. In one town, where he had been specially liberal, the neighbors ran in and out of each other's houses asking what day of the month it was, consulting almanacs, and wondering what it all meant. The children, however, were perfectly satisfied; and when they received the second installment of presents from Santa Claus himself at the proper time, they were so delighted that they wished there could be two Christmases every year.

It was funny, however, to hear of the way Kriss distributed his presents; for as he knew nothing of the several inmates of the houses, he bestowed them as they came to hand. He left a solitary old bachelor an ivory rattle and a little crying pussy-cat; a little girl, not yet three months old, had a pair of skates left upon her cradle; a boy of ten found a little white hood and a tiny silver thimble in his room; a severe old maid, who did nothing but knit coarse, hard, but very durable stockings for her little nieces, and who hated games as inventions of Satan, found a set of ten pins, and a backgammon board set out upon her table; a whole family of children had nothing to divide but an empty picture-frame; and a grave old minister was surprised when he went into his study to find a fine little fiddle lying just on top of his half-finished sermon for the next Sunday.

But, puzzle as they might, nobody ever found out the truth of this frolic. As for the toys Kriss left on the roof, I do not know exactly what became of them. Santa Claus looked for them, but in vain; so it would, perhaps, be well to say now that if any boy or girl living in a town northwest of Boston found some toys, one being a walking doll and another a fishing pole, upon a roof close to a chimney, in the winter of 1870, they may know from this account just how they came there.

"PAT," said a traveller, "why did you make the stone wall around your shanty so thick?" "Why, please yer honor, I hear they have extraordinary high winds in Ameriky, so I thought if I built it about as thick as it was high, if it should blow over it would be just as high as it was afore, yer honor."

WHEN an enthusiastic editor describes a bride as bonny, and an envious compositor sets her up as bony, as was done at Jacksonville the other day, hope for a season bids the world farewell, and freedom shrieks as the compositor falls at his form, brained by the brother of the blooming bride.

PROFESSOR BROWN, of Baltimore, in explaining to a class of young ladies the theory according to which the body is entirely renewed every seven years, said, "Thus, Miss B—, in seven years you will in reality be no longer Miss B—." The young lady modestly dropped her eyes, and with a tone demure responded, "I really hope I sha'n't."

LOUISVILLE has unwittingly committed itself to a grand temperance reform by voting to send drunkards and editors home instead of to the lock-up. Not even the most confirmed inebriates require second treatment. They generally come out about the third day a little more bald, and with a scared look about the eyes that tells of the chastening influence of a good Christian home.

THE lady who tapped her husband gently with a fan at a party the other night, and said, "Love, it's growing late; I think we had better go home," is the same one who, after getting home, shook the rolling-pin under his nose and said, "You infernal old scoundrel, you; if you ever look again at that mean, nasty, calico-faced, mackerel-eyed thing that you looked at to-night, I'll bust your head wide open."

The Ladies' Page.

ECONOMY IN FUEL.

In addition to the suggestions which have already appeared in these columns, one or two methods of managing fires may with advantage be pointed out at this season of the year. First, the laying of a fire is not an unimportant matter, because, too often, time is wasted as well as fuel, and patience sadly tried, in consequence of the ineffectual efforts of ignorant servants to get a fire to burn which has been badly laid. Not one housemaid in twenty knows how to place the wood, coals, &c., in the grate in a manner that will insure a good fire burning up quickly and without filling the room with smoke. A few simple rules on the subject, based on the laws of "ventilation" and "combustion," might make even such a "menial" duty as the laying and lighting of a fire interesting, as well as profitable, in more senses than one. A great deal of fuel is wasted by allowing fires to go out in rooms that are only used occasionally, at long intervals, during the day. There are other objections to this careless habit; the room becomes cold, and the chilling sight of a fire just lighted adds to the discomfort of a meal partaken of under such untoward circumstances. Another bad habit on the part of servants is to stir a fire too often, and to be frequently putting on fresh coals; this is very wasteful. A room that is not wanted from breakfast till early dinner or luncheon, as the case may be, and from that again till late dinner should have the fire "made up" to last the number of hours required. Experience will teach how this may be done. A fire can be made to keep in without being touched for two, three, four, and even five or six hours. I once, by way of experiment, made up a fire to last all night, and it succeeded; it was well supplied with cinders and coals, wetted, and patted down, at 1 p. m., and at 7 a. m. it was stirred up and burnt brightly till 10 a. m., requiring no more coals till that hour.

FEMALE RESOLUTION.

A memorable instance of courage was displayed on the occasion of the defence of Erlau, during the period of the last and most arduous campaign of Castaldo, Count of Pladena, against the Turks in Hungary, under the Emperor Charles V. In respect of fortifications, the town of Erlau was scarcely competent to resist the feeblest enemy; but its deficiency in this point was supplied by the constancy and valor of its garrison and inhabitants. The very women displayed an enterprise that the more vigorous sex can seldom boast to have exhibited. In one instance a heroine of this sort was seen fighting in the presence of her mother and her husband. Her husband fell dead by her side.

"Let us, my daughter," said the mother, "remove the body, and devote the rest of our care to its honorable funeral."

"May God," returned the impassioned widow, "never suffer the earth to cover my husband's corpse, till his death has been amply revenged; this is the hour of battle, not a time for funerals and for tears!"

So speaking, and seizing the sword and shield of the breathless champion, she rushed upon the enemy; nor did she quit the breach till, by the slaughter of three Turks who were ascending the scaling-ladders, she had appeased the fury in her breast, and the ghost of her departed husband. Then raising the corpse, and pressing it to her bosom, she drew it to the great church of the city, and paid to it the last honors with all possible magnificence.

PUDDINGS WITHOUT EGGS.—Rice, large pearl sago, and tapioca are best when made without eggs. Sprinkle a little of any one of the above at the bottom of a pudding dish; add a little sugar, and fill up with milk. Stir well before placing in the oven. To the sago add a small piece of cinnamon broken up. The rice must be baked quite four hours, the sago and tapioca about three. Skim milk will do if you cannot spare new milk.

MARMALADE.—One dozen, of Seville oranges, put them into strong brine three days, changing it each day; then with a spoon strip the peel off each half, cut the pulp in rounds, take out the pips, cut the peel very thin indeed in strips, boil altogether till it looks quite clear. The oranges are to be weighed to an equal quantity of sugar; it takes a long time boiling, as it must not bubble too fast, else the sugar is apt to candy before the fruit is done enough.

STEWED OYSTERS.—The beard, or fringe, is generally taken off. If this is done, set on the beards with the liquor of the oysters and a little white gravy, rich, but unseasoned. Having boiled a few minutes, strain off the beards, put in the oysters, and thicken the gravy with flour and butter (an ounce of butter to half a pint of stew), a little salt, pepper, nutmeg, or mace, a spoonful of catsup, and three of cream. Some prefer a little essence of anchovy to catsup, others the juice of a lemon. The flavour may be varied according to taste. Simmer till the stew is thick and the oysters warmed through, but avoid letting them boil. Lay toasted sippets at the bottom of the dish and round the edges.

"ONLY a woman's hair," is an article the worth of which varies considerably according to circumstances. From Belinda's priceless lock down to the scanty top-knot of the redoubtable Sally Brass there are gradations infinite. A County Court case reported by a Birmingham

paper, affords an instance of the difficulty of appraising this feminine ornament. A claim of £1 was made by the plaintiff in this case for the destruction of his wife's hair by the defendant while making it into a curl. It appeared that the hair-dresser at first attempted, at the request of the owner, to arrange the hair in some other form; that he separated it at considerable cost of time and trouble, in order to see the best mode of dealing with it; that it proved so irregular that he could only make a curl of it; and that it was, unfortunately, burnt by the curling iron. The hair was, according to the defendant, worth a penny, and he had offered his customer another curl, which she had refused. Under these circumstances his lawyer submitted that the claim of £1 was exorbitant, and the judgment finally given fixed the value of the curl at 2s. 6d.

THE first dahlia was introduced into England by Lady Holland, and is thus alluded to in "Holland House," the recent work of the Princess Marie Lichtenstein: "Having been much gratified somewhere in the South of Europe by her first acquaintance with Palestine soup, and, ascertaining that the main ingredient was the Jerusalem artichoke, Lady Holland procured what she supposed to be a root of it, and forwarded it (probably by a king's messenger) to her gardener at Holland House. When a beautiful flower came up instead of a succulent vegetable, she gazed on it with a feeling near akin to the fox-hunter, who complained that the smell of the violets spoiled the scent. But the value of her acquisition began to break upon her when the London seedsmen, who came to look at it, offered thirty guineas for a root. Another version is, that a root was given to her at Valencia in 1804 by a celebrated botanist, who had just received it, an unknown rarity, from South America. At all events, there was ample justification for the graceful verses of her lord:

The dahlia you brought to our isle,
Your praises for ever shall speak,
In gardens as sweet as your smile,
And colours as bright as your cheek."

THE following cases of remarkable courage have just been brought before the Royal Humane Society. The first case was that of Miss Olivia G. Orgiana E. Maude. She saved the life of a girl named Adele Greaven, who sank while bathing at Sea Point, Monkstown, under the following circumstances: Miss Maude and her sister, who had themselves been bathing, were dressed and sitting on the rocks watching the other bathers, when their attention was aroused by an alarming outcry—a girl had disappeared in deep water. No assistance was at hand, no boat or ropes, and even the usual attendants were absent or otherwise engaged. The child soon rose to the surface, but, unable to swim, sank again. She rose a second time, and the bystanders and bathing women, thoroughly alarmed and crying for assistance, were shocked at perceiving that the child's bathing dress had got over her face and head, and that her arms were entangled in it. At this moment Miss Maude leaped into the deep water, dressed as she was, without even taking time to remove her watch, caught the child as she was disappearing the third time, and took her safely to shore. The other case was that of Miss Mary Kerridge, who saved a lad of 15, named Stewart, who sank while bathing at Wentworth, New South Wales. The boy had gone with a companion to bathe in the river Darling, and was carried by a strong current into deep water. Neither he nor his companion could swim, and he cried loudly for help. Miss Kerridge was about a hundred yards off, and, hearing the boy's cries, ran as fast as she could to the spot, plunged into the river with all her clothes on, and caught the lad as he rose the third time. After considerable difficulty, owing to the rapidity of the current, having only one hand at liberty, and her efforts being impeded by the weight of her clothes, she ultimately succeeded in placing the lad in safety. The Royal Humane Society bestowed medals for saving life, with suitable testimonials, on each of the young ladies.

MUSH.—Put some water or milk into a pot, and bring it to boil, then let the corn meal out of one hand gently into the milk or water, and keep stirring with the other, until you have got it into a pretty stiff state; after which let it stand ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, or less, or even only one minute, and then take it out, and put it into a dish or bowl. This sort of half-pudding, half-porridge, you eat either hot or cold, with a little salt or without it. It is eaten without any liquid matter, but the general way is to have a basin of milk, and taking a lump of the mush you put it into the milk, and eat the two together. Here is an excellent pudding, whether eaten with milk or without it; and where there is no milk, it is an excellent substitute for bread, whether you take it hot or cold. It is neither hard or lumpy when cold, but quite light and digestible for the most feeble stomachs. The Indian corn-flour is more wholesome than wheat flour in all its manners of cooking. It is a great convenience for the workman in the fields that mush can be eaten cold. It is, in fact, moist bread, and habit soon makes it pleasanter than bread. It is a great thing for all classes of persons, but particularly for the labourer. He may have bread every day, and he may have it hot or cold, and there is more nutrition in it than you can get out of the same quantity of wheat flour. It is eaten at the best tables in America a most every day; some like it hot, some cold, some with milk, some to slice it down and eat it with meat, some like it best made with water, others with milk, but all like it in one way or another. Some put these cold slices again into the oven,

and eat them hot, or they may be heated on the griddle. It is believed that the Indian corn even used in this one single manner, does more, as food for man, than all the wheat that is grown in the country, though the flour from that wheat is acknowledged to be the best in the world.

THOSE who are interested in the higher education of women—and who is not?—will read with interest the annual report of the Cambridge examination of women above eighteen years of age for the year 1873. It is an instructive document in many particulars, and is short and lucid. These examinations were simultaneously held at nine centres. Two hundred and twenty candidates entered, twenty-five subsequently withdrew, and one hundred and ninety-five presented themselves. Religious knowledge is well spoken of as showing thoughtfulness, reverence, and fair acquaintance with the Bible. But young ladies are recommended not to be too ambitious; and whereas they are given Hooker, Butler, and Paley as optional subjects, they are advised not to attempt all three. The tendency to discursiveness both in reading and writing is pointed out by several sets of examiners, and is, of course, just what we might expect. Most persons will be glad to hear that "a large majority of the candidates showed a very creditable mastery over arithmetic." This is a real progress, for confessedly young ladies are not usually great in that department of knowledge. Of figure they are fair judges, because they give it so much attention, but of the plural number of that word in relation to finance and quantity they have a "horror." The historical papers were very good, especially at the Cambridge centre, but the candidates are advised to avoid "mere fluency of expression." The besetting sin of the English literature papers was "irrelevance." We think we have heard of that fault before. But the instance adduced in illustration is certainly a wicked one. Our readers will be pained to learn that when these fair candidates, were required to "give a brief summary of the 'Hydriothaphia,' " instead of at once plunging into the subject, and pointing out all the salient points and principal headings of that universally known work, they adroitly slipped off the rails, and occupied their time with "an account, not brief, of Sir Thomas Browne," its distinguished author. The examiner gets quite angry over this, and adds (rather spitefully, we think) "that several candidates who complained of a want of time had signally mispent in this sort of way the time allowed them." They were the papers of young women, just like their writers, reproducing feminine faults and virtues. Very good. We like the young ladies all the better for that, as showing that all their hard reading had not driven out of them those essential mental peculiarities of their sex which we all laugh at and all admire, and which we do not wish to see got rid of on any account. It is most satisfactory to see that the greatest improvement is traceable where it is most needed, in the subjects that most conduce to the cultivation of the mental powers and the formation of character. Lastly, it is in the highest degree pleasing to observe that all this improvement is going forward without any diminution of the special qualities and characteristics which make woman all that she is in the estimation of right-thinking men. By such cultivation she is not moved out of her sphere. She is only made nobler, wiser, better, more lovable in it.

CHRISTMAS.

The festival of Christmas is no mere carnal concert of the appetite, but a grand rejoicing of love and faith that stretches from pole to pole—a more than electric chain of brotherhood among peoples of every latitude, who, one and all, have a sympathetic affinity for the human congregations, either within the pale or beyond the borders of the blessing. The celebration is universal. Europe, bound up in frost, shakes hands with burning India and the sunny Australasian lands—whose summer is our winter; European settlements that fringe mystic Africa; China, Japan and many an island trodden by Christian feet, participate; and from Patagonia to the Arctic Sea the huge New World joins in the glad song of the grand anniversary of the year. All the Christian people of the wide earth herald the approach of the recurring morning with the heart's chaunt—

This is the month, and this the happy morn,
Wherein the Son of Heaven's Eternal King,
Of wedded maid and virgin mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring.

There is not in this day a land of which the sun shines in which at Christmas the banner of the Cross is not unfurled in the winds of the latest dispensation. The rigid philosophies of the mere brain are dumb in that season, and the wildly-beating pulsations of the world of interest and passion are toned down to the healthful temperance of a sentiment, which is far, very far, removed from the conflicts of every day selfishness. In the language of the great human interpreter of the Divine law, the time is "hallowed and gracious." Hallowed because dedicated to a sincere thanksgiving, and gracious because then the best sympathies of our nature break from out the crust that has gathered over them during the past year's rough experiences, and show an activity as if they had been refreshed by partial or complete slumber. And that generosity of impulse and deeds is now confined to no nation or clime—it pervades the universe which Christians call civilized.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

BY EMILE M. FORD.

THE MANGER AND THE SHEEPFOLD.

"My yoke is easy and my burden light."
 "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures."

Within a lowly room,
 In dim, uncertain gloom,
 There lay a virgin mother undefiled.
 Upon her couch of pain
 She bore the shuddering strain
 And heard the dear cry of her first-born child.

The patient cattle saw
 Without a thrill of awe
 The tiny infant's coming in their midst.
 The creatures did not now
 That in their manger low
 Lay helpless Christ-child, oft by Mary kissed.

Nor knew they, this dear friend
 To their poor lives would lend
 A kinder love and care for His dear sake.
 That all unknown, unsought,
 He for them pity brought, [break.
 And henceforth lighter yokes their necks would

Nor did the silly sheep,
 On hill-side fast asleep,
 Dream that the shouting in the far-off sky
 Meant love and kindness given
 From out the highest heaven
 To the poor beasts that raised not one dull eye.

The angel chorus clear,
 Poured in each senseless ear, [nigh.
 Ne'er told them that their Lord and King was
 And watchful herdsmen slow,
 And shepherd dogs, did go
 Through quiet flocks who all asleep did lie.

But still the blessing came,
 In sky-words of soft flame,
 That horned cattle would be better for His life;
 That beasts of every name,
 The wild as well as tame, [strife.
 Should taste some blessed peace from out His

And surely it was meant
 That Christ to all was sent—
 To worlds of suffering beasts as well as men.
 The manger He did bless,
 The sheepfold not the less,
 And helpless creatures fall within His ken.

A PILGRIMAGE AMONG THE BOARDING-HOUSES OF LONDON.

"CREME DE LA CREME."

Is not Montmorenci-terrace, Regent's Park, the very pink of propriety? Does not its brand-new expanse of frontage seem to wink and glisten with a sense of excellence, a sort of "See, I am not as other people are" appearance, a species of pharisaical hugging of itself aspect combined with unlimited ablution with choice scented soap? Sashes of the very best plate-glass are backed with imitation lace-curtains, over which droop bright green wooden blinds that rattle one by one, as the usual inmates take observations of the early morning weather; bakers' men lean gossiping over stone balustrades, philandering with rosy servant-girls who make pretence of scrubbing doorsteps; butcher-boys linger in the two square yards of garden, behind which propriety intrenches itself, plucking a flower and a leaf or two of speckled laurel wherewith to adorn their cerulean garments. An individual of the genus "odd man," may be seen here and there giving an extra polish to the dining-room bow windows, or putting a finishing touch to the balsams and fuchsias that cluster on the sill. You could not find a single speck of smut along the whole line of houses, for the principles of Montmorenci-terrace are to be as much *en evidence* as may be, and to court inquiry into the unimpeachable graining of its woodwork or the pointing of its yellow bricks.

In the very centre of its noble sweep there is a palace, a gorgeous temple rising above the general line, surmounted by a waving flag, and emblazoned with legends in red, and blue, and gold; a magnificent edifice, that might be the shrine of a tutelary deity, the Holy of Holies of Saint Buckram. About its railings hang bright festoons, probably votive offerings of pious worshippers. Yet no, those glittering things are all alike, of a familiar shape—verily, the pewter pot of commerce, and oh! with what sorrow must the word be spoken, the palace is, indeed, a public-house! The dwellings immediately on either side of it are not of brick, but faced with stone, looking, therefore, as though they had turned pale, and all the other houses are so extremely yellow, that they, too, must have suffered from an epidemic of jaundice, the result of rankling shame. The three last houses in the row have been transformed into one, with a central entrance, over which hangs a lamp bearing the device "Plantagenet Residences," the windows of which are alike set off by the red

striped blinds, all of them drawn down except those of the middle bow, wherein sundry gentlemen and ladies converse, awaiting the morning meal.

I have engaged an apartment at this establishment, and occupy the pedestal accordingly, bag in hand, while the ladies and gentlemen pause to examine me critically, previous to my introduction to them. An admirable plan, by-the-by, this pedestal, and not unlike the process of "taking your portrait," as practised by turn-keys in the Fleet, years ago. I pose in a becoming attitude, slightly curving the back, and developing one hip in emulation of Hogarth's line of beauty, and feel that I am making a good impression, until, at length, the door is opened. Mrs. Mudie, the land-lady, receives me with a bow and a smile; the exquisitely grained portal closes upon me, and I enter on my noviciate just as a loud bell clatters over the house, calling its inhabitants to breakfast. Mrs. Mudie is rather stout, or, let us say, plump—no, buxom—with a hard face, on which has been carved a smile, long ago, for the express benefit of the boarders. She speaks very slowly, as though she had a bit in her mouth, at which she was ever champing. That bit is the letter H, a cruel curb that cuts her tongue and lacerates her lips. Occasionally she forgets herself, loses her temper with the servants—her smile never changes to the boarders—and then she flecks herself with metaphorical foam, and the eighth letter slides altogether from her alphabet. Of course she has known better days, and is intimate with all kinds of peers and peeresses with whom her hearers are unacquainted.

"Do you know the Duke of Thanet?" you inquire, as an experiment.

"Do you?" she asks, cautiously.

"No, I haven't the honor."

"Lord bless you!" she riposts, certain now that there are no breakers ahead. "Know him! I've known him ever since I was a little girl. His grace and I used to ride together to 'ounds. I was the best 'orse-woman of my day. I've got a whip up-stairs given me by his grace, who presented it as a mark of admiration—admiration—when I took a leap his horse refused. And his son the earl, too. A charming fellow. People used to say about us—but never mind."

When her curb is more than usually unruly in her mouth, she puts up her hand and champs it firmly, repeating the obdurate word with emendations. Thus, when vexed one day, she petulantly exclaimed, "Thank 'eaven, in our h-eternal 'ome there'll be no 'ousekeeping. Ahem! heaven, eternal home, housekeeping." Her powers of imagination are little less than marvellous. She will commence a story with an evident goal in the distance, but finding that it might be improved upon, and perceiving fresh vistas on her journey, she will quietly change its object as she goes on, until at length she has landed herself on entirely other ground, very much to her own satisfaction. Before I had known her ten minutes she had improvised a narrative of her early life, according to which her father had been a respectable solicitor in a midland county town, where she kept house for him over his office; but breakfast was scarcely cleared away when, presto! he had become a country squire, "Quite of the old school, you know, with his pack of beagle 'ounds—'ounds—beautiful old-fashioned gardens, dairy, farm," and all en suite. "Bless you, young Lord Pickle-boy, a wild young slip, used to come riding over to us in the morning to take me to the meet, and people did say—well, no matter."

Mrs. Mudie is as bright, and new, and creaking as her abode. Her face shines with soapy varnish, her hair glistens with pomade. She is pink and white and round, as though just turned out from Nature's lathe undinted, before Time has modified the colors or rubbed the smoothness from the surface. Her smile smacks of newness too; its angles are so precisely marked, the carving is so distinct and vigorously fresh. Her silk gown shines with peculiar lustre, and marks of folding on it proving that it has just come from the emporium, whilst as for her jewellery, the beads, the ormolu buckles, the manacle bracelets, the paraphernalia of pendent gawags, nothing could be more bright and glittering. Her voice is terribly new and sharp, not properly oiled as yet, working with abrupt jerks and stops like cordage just issued from its maker's shop.

It must be admitted that Plantagenet Residences is an excellent house, a trifle thin in the walls perhaps, but large as to its apartments, and expensive as to its decorations. Crockery of all kinds bears the Mudie crest, with the motto, "Facile princeps," in graceful commemoration of the fact that P. R. is the very best boarding-house in town. Over each chimney-piece is a framed placard setting forth the fact that board and lodging is obtained on these unexceptionable premises at the rate of three guineas a week, that breakfast is at nine, luncheon at one, dinner at seven, tea at half-past eight. That dogs, cats, and birds are objected to; that gas is turned off at the meter at eleven P. M.; and finally, that "dressmaking will under no circumstances be permitted in the drawing-room." But the second bell has clattered forth its summons, and twenty-two gentlemen and ladies are making for the dining-room. They are for the most part Americans; mothers with pretty daughters gorgeously attired, whose carriages will presently arrive to wait them westwards, alternately shopping and sight-seeing until luncheon time. Packets of letters and newspapers lie under each napkin, vases of artificial flowers crown the board, whereon are spread the elements of an excellent breakfast. Tea, coffee, cocoa, three or four dishes of hot meat, tea-cakes, muffins, crumpets, fruit, quite

a sybaritic feast. There is a crumpled family such as America alone produces; papa, tall, thin, fallow, pointed, and sharp-edged; mamma, with a face like a bag of whity-brown paper crumpled into a ball; six children in various stages of thinness, edginess, and puckering, with hair that cannot be said to curl, for all its waves are angles, enjoying a repast of cold mutton and water, with a grim satisfaction of asceticism that makes one's fingers itch to administer slaps. There is also a single lady, young and very pretty, who reads a book with downcast eyes during the meal, for she is a Quakeress from Pennsylvania, of the most rigorous order. She hardly ever speaks, and then in a subdued whisper, and one marvels what she can be doing here, friendless and alone, until a glance at the volume before her betrays the fact that she is a tourist, a Rights of Women lady, studying her guide-book as though it were a breviary. Next to her is a young man, who casts quite an ecclesiastical glamor over us by reason of his being one of the choir of St. Paul's Cathedral, and next to him again is a spinster of middle age, a public singer of some kind, now become music mistress, as she sinks into the sere and florid. She discusses choruses and Novello's list with the ecclesiastical gentleman, humming and nodding refrains at him, performing, the while, imaginary accompaniments on the tablecloth. At the extreme end sit an old man and woman, both of them characters in their way. Doctor M'Ayr is very small and withered, buttoned up to the chin in a well-worn frock-coat, possessed of a countenance in which there is no life, like the medalion on a tomb portraying the dead lineaments of him who lies within. He wears large spectacles tied behind his bald head with an elastic cord, and sits muttering to himself, oblivious of the chattering around. Now and again, a light appears to gleam through the glasses, and he suddenly propounds a question which receives no answer, and then with a murmured, "Ay! ay! ay!" and a gurgle like a piece of clockwork running down, retires into himself and disposes more. He is a Scotch professor, at one time much respected at a northern university, where he lived like a spider, colling and uncolling some specially technical web, until one day a middle-aged peer's daughter, very poor and lonely, married him, forced him to abandon his studies and his home to vegetate in London. And so, the poor professor's occupation being gone, he glories instead in the possession of Lady Matilda M'Ayr, and every morning after breakfast unpacks certain shabby old tomes, ranges them lovingly along the dinner-table, gums up their cracks with a little brush, pastes labels on their venerable backs, continually droning a monologue of "Ay! ay! ay!" and its accompanying gurgle until the luncheon bell rings, when his companions will be ruthlessly swept away, he will be furnished up for an afternoon drive, and the next morning will paste and gurgle, and arrange, again to be swept up and furnished daily until his life's end. Lady Matilda is tall, with a profusion of black hair held down by a black velvet across her noble brow. She appears at breakfast in a weird tartan flowing garment with a great cape, which makes her look like a Gothic Puginian extinguisher, studies the fashionable arrangements in the *Morning Post*, as she mumbles her muffin, occasionally digging up her lord from his abstraction with her sharp elbow, or launching into a passage of arms with Mrs. Mudie about the peerage, should that lady's loquacity induce her to build up apocryphal castles on unsafe ground, without having previously ascertained that her aristocratic puppets are strangers to present company.

"Lor bless you, Lady Matilda, sure-ly you're wrong; why I've known the Earl of Plymouth these fifteen years, at least—ahem, earl my father used to take him sailing in his yacht—oh yes, we had a yacht, and a fine one too. The earl—ahem, earl—doted on yachting, and once gave me a present that I've got upstairs and will show you some day. His lordship and I were great friends, and some of the busy-bodies did say—but what's the use of talking about that now?"

"What's the exact amount of poor-rate in the Blairgowrie union, does any one know?" burst in the doctor. "Ay! ay! ay! gr-r-r—"

The American young ladies wax very loud and nasal, and finally rustle to the drawing-room up-stairs to await their carriages; the crumpled children retire to their lessons, and the doctor is left alone to croon over his cherished library.

But as six o'clock approaches, cabs, carriages, and pedestrians arrive in front of the glass-lamp, the brilliant brass-knocker is continually on the rat-rat, a perfect gallery of statues occupies the pedestal, and the superior grained door is for ever on the move. The bell, which seems never quiet, rings for dressing at half-past six, and the distinguished company troops down at seven, augmented by a few guests, all in the full splendor of evening dress. Lady Matilda is in black silk. She is adorned with miniatures set on velvet on wrist and bosom, besides being otherwise rendered glorious by a sort of coronal of white camellias and lace, which cause her to appear like the typical embodiment of a churchyard watching over a shrunken mortal who flutters on the borders of this world with a spasmodic imitation of life, although his soul has long since taken flight. The crumpled children make a liberal display of skinny shoulder and arm, their countenances having become still further wizened by an additional dose of learning; the ex-professional lady wears a very low gown and a flower in her hair, as though about to warble in a concert-

hall; the ecclesiastical gentleman now assumes the appearance of an occasional waiter minus his berlin-gloves; whilst the American young ladies are magnificent with the very newest fashions straight from France. Mrs. Mudie, who has decorated herself with scarlet feathers and jewels straight from the Burlington Arcade, occupies the head of the table, and carves incessantly, her wooden smile being overlaid and mosaiced, as it were, with a look of anxiety and warmth varied by hissing asides to the servants relative to unsatisfactory handings-round. Truly the dinner at Plantagenet Residences is a grand institution. Low people who may be wandering without, and who are doubtless looking in with awe over the speckled laurels, will consider this a great and exceptional spread, but they will be mistaken, for the fascinating sight may be witnessed nightly gratis by all who choose, until cold weather shall set in, necessitating closed windows and a drawing of comfortable curtains. But even the grandeur of the long table, artificial flowers, and unlimited gas, is eclipsed by the tableau of the drawing-room at tea-time. Although the heavy richness and substantialness of the establishment is not altogether unpleasant, there is an innate lack of beauty in its surroundings, for which even the tasty costumes of the Transatlantic young ladies cannot quite make up. Yet the effect in the drawing-room is mighty fine. People sit in coterie, one group totally independent of another, a circle of chairs shut in, discussing their affairs as though no other group sat near them. The American circle occupies one end of the large room, and fairly drowns all other conversation. One or two of them produce pen and ink to write up their journals; others study the guide to London; one young lady produces all the jewellery she has purchased during her continental travels, spreading it on a table for the others to buzz round like an array of wedding gifts, though the Quakeress keeps her eyes steadily on her book, to show that the dross of this world is naught to her.

"Oh, my!" cries one, "that's bully; may I try them on? Now that's gra-a-nd," spoken with a pulled out drawl like something snoring through a trumpet.

"Oh, I've had enough of traveling," shouts another. "I wanted to see Europe as fast as I could and get home again—just one specimen of each thing, you know. What's the use of piling a parcel of the same things one on 't'other like dry goods in a store? So I just said I'd see one specimen of each, and went to Switzerland, where I said to the courier, 'Show me Mount Blanc. I'm told it's the biggest mountain they have, so I want to see it. I don't care about the others.' And he showed me Mount Blanc, and I came away, having liked it very much, without being bothered by the rest. No I've not seen St. Paul's because I saw Notre Dame at Paris, and one cathedral, I suppose, is the same as another all the world over. People do so waste their time in traveling, pottering over the same things. Why, I've done Europe in less than three weeks, and expect to be back in New York in six from the day I started."

"What would be the exact cost of sending two boys under twelve to a public school, does any one know?" cried Doctor M'Ayr, waking up.

"Nonsense, my dear," objected Lady Matilda, deigning an answer for once; "you haven't got any, so what's the use of talking rubbish."

"Ay! ay! ay! Gr-r-r—"

Tea being over, some one suggests a little music, and Mrs. Mudie hands the ex-professional lady ceremoniously to the piano, thereby putting to flight the ecclesiastical gentleman who is improving his time by flirting with an American girl behind the window curtain. "I'm sure," simpers she of, the very low dress, "No one wants music. I wouldn't disturb the conversation for the world." Whereupon there's a chorus of "Oh yes, music by all means." The nasal voices become louder still, just as canaries make a point of straining their throats when an instrument is played upon, and the ex-professional lady runs her fat fingers over the keys. Her voice is thin, if her body is not, and remarkably out of tune. As it is not always within her control, running off into unexpected sidings, she invariably selects music of the most ambitious kind, indulging in portentous recitatives, attempting acrobatic feats on her very highest note, in imitation of the "nightingale's trill," and declaring artlessly that she would do wonderful things if only she could "through ether fly," a very unlikely contingency considering her size and weight. At last there is a difference of opinion between herself and her voice as to the exact note on which to shriek "Infelice," and we so fully participate her sentiments as to be heartily glad when she has risen and made way for the gentleman from St. Paul's. After every song Lady Matilda, being of the highest rank, and therefore head of the claque, bows with a solemn "Thank you," which is gravely re-echoed by everybody, until she is like the clerk saying "Amen" at church. Then the ecclesiastical gentleman favors us with what he is pleased to denominate "bits"—fragments from Stabat Mater, solo lines from choruses, and other choice extracts from his choir music. These are, doubtless, delightful as patterns or samples of his talent, but leave really too much to the imagination with a sense of incompleteness so distressing to the well-regulated mind, that it quite hails with joy the ignominious moment when the parlor maid appears with flat candlesticks, remarking that it is eleven o'clock, and that the gas will be inexorably and incontinently turned off at the meter as threatened in the glazed placard hanging on every bedroom wall.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

PERSIMMON coffee is much preferred to the burned bean variety in Georgia.

AN Iowa doctor thinks tight lacing is a public benefit, because it kills off the foolish girls and leaves the wise ones to grow into women.

ENGLISH beer is not always worth fifty cents a bottle. Dr. Lowe says, the "impurities" consist of fusil oil and tobacco juice, in addition to the common fraud of a large proportion of salt and a certain amount of alum.

THE position of medical adviser to the tribe of Tulare Indians, in California, is vacant. The late incumbent had intrusted to his care a number of sick Indians, all of whom, unfortunately, died, upon which a grand council was held, and the medicine man was condemned to death and promptly executed.

BISHOP Heber wrote the popular hymn "From Greenland's Icy Mountains," one Saturday evening in the old vicarage house of his father-in-law, Dean Shirley, who needed it for a special occasion. He composed it in a very short time, only one word needed correction, and it was printed that evening and sung the following day in Wrexham Church. The printer is still living who set up the types when a boy.

DEAF AND DUMB.—Dassent estimates that in Europe alone there are 200,000 afflicted in this way. In mountainous regions, as in Switzerland and Savoy, the proportion is very great. In the Berne Canton there is one to every 195 inhabitants, in Scotland, one to 196. In Great Britain, however, the proportion is only one in 1,660; in Ireland one in 1,380. At the census in 1851 there were 12,553 deaf and dumb, 6,884 male, 5,669 female. They have increased in number during the last twenty years, the former still heading the list.

A GREAT BAG.—The Lord Chancellor's bag is worn around the neck of this exalted officer of the British Government. It is an elaborate affair, made of silk, gold lace, and embroidery. When the Lord Chancellor goes into the official presence of his sovereign this bag rests on his breast, and it contains the petitions which the loyal subjects desire to be laid before the throne. Every new Chancellor must have a new bag, and these are always retained as the precious heir-looms of the family. The great seal of England is always kept in the bottom of this bag.

A SOLDIER-MONK.—Charles de Courtille, Marquis de Chavenay, one of the great names of France, and a descendant on the female side of the Capuchin, Father Joseph, the confidant of Richelieu, has just entered the Monastery of La Trappe. During the war he was one of the heroes of the charge of Reichshoffen. Being wounded at Monsbronn, he rallied the squadrons and still continued to fight valiantly until he fell from his horse through exhaustion, and was left for dead. He was about to be interred when some one perceived that he still breathed, and being attended to he recovered. Taken prisoner, he made his escape and joined the army of the Loire. At the combat of La Rolande he was again wounded and made captive. On his liberation he learnt the death of his wife, a victim of her devotedness to the ambulances, and his father had been killed at the battle of Patay. These successive afflictions plunged him into a deep melancholy and decided him to become a monk.

A STARTLING DEATH.—At a spiritualistic service recently held at Birmingham a medium named Benjamin Hawkes, a toy dealer, addressed the meeting. He spoke for fully half an hour, appearing to be in his usual health, and then he described with startling vividity a *seance* in which the Apostle Peter had manifested himself to the assembled spirits. Peter had clasped hands with him, and he (Hawkes) felt the close pressure of the Apostle's grasp. From this he argued that it was quite possible to understand how Thomas of Didymus thrust his hand into the side of "the Personification of Divine Love." The instant these last words were out of the speaker's mouth he fell back on a chair behind him. There was great excitement, for this meeting believed Hawkes was under strong "spirit control." A few seconds elapsed, and a surgeon came up to the medium, and found him dead. The meeting broke up in wild confusion. Perhaps a more exciting scene never occurred than the death of this man, with the wild words of his fervent belief fresh on his lips.

GRAMMAR.—It has been truly said that cultivated women speak better English than cultivated men. And the reason of that is, the most of them have taken in their language by absorption. They have never dulled their English idioms by stilted translations of the classics. It is true that they often use phrases and turns of expression that are very wearisome from constant repetition, such as "perfectly lovely" and "horrid" and they usually air what they possess of French—which is a still greater source of weakness—but on the whole they speak better, purer, and more idiomatic English than men. But it was not the study of grammar that taught the ladies to express themselves clearly and neatly; and in the majority of cases, if you ask one of them to analyze or parse any one of her graceful or clever sentences, or give the rules by which she constructed it, she cannot do so. The same thing may be said of public speakers. A man with a rush of oratory in his brain frequently violates grammatical laws, and we are not sure that the oration is not sometimes the more telling on that account. One of the veterans of our Bar—a man whose reputation is national, even world-wide, as a great jurist and as a very powerful speaker—uses in his moments of oratorical inspiration the verb "aint." No

one can hear him use it without thinking that, if there be no such word, there ought to be; and when with his resonant voice and strong face and square gesture, he condemns a principle as unsound, and says, "Taint the law," the greatest grammatical purist would acknowledge the force of that crushing neuter verb.

SPANISH "EXISTENCE."—A writer on Spanish domestic life says that "at early morn the master rises, and his little cup of chocolate, an egg, and a slice of melon await him in the *sala*, or large sitting-room—to English eyes a most comfortable place, very large, stone-flagged, with a few massive chairs, walls painted in the rudest way, and one large table in the midst. The rooms, owing to the heat, are always kept darkened by means of closed shutters throughout the day—some of the windows have glass, some not; but all are strongly protected, without exception, by a strong cage of massive iron-work outside. The senora has the chocolate in her bedroom, at the open window, enjoying the fresh morning breeze. All the Spaniards rise, as a rule, at five or six in the summer, to enjoy the only enjoyable time of the summer day. At one o'clock they have dinner, the *comida*, and after that follows the two hours *siesta* in a darkened room. Evening then draws on, the delicious night breeze rises and blows freshly from the hills, and the ladies go out in groups to the *alameda* for the *pasado* or walk. Such is the Spanish lady's day. She has, however, her *creadas* to look after, and, above all, her dresses to make or superintend, and her graceful mantle to arrange. It is quite a striking sight to pass down the streets from six to eight at night, and see the graceful carriage of the head and the stately upright walk of the Spanish ladies, with their long white dresses trailing behind them in a cloud of dust. How they manage to walk over the rough, unpaved, uneven streets without a trip is a mystery. At about ten at night, to rise up refreshed for another uneventful day."

SLANDER.—It is hard to imagine a neighborhood difficulty that does not have its origin in the recklessness of the slanderer's tongue. Aside from individual bitterness and quarrels that destroy the social pleasures of a community, the slanderer divides the forces of society, and thus cripples all enterprises that require a union of the people. The practice of libelling one's neighbors has its origin in inherent demonism; it serves no purpose, pays the perpetrator nothing for his dirty work. The victims of unmerited abuse, in the recklessness of lacerated pride, of which he at first may be wrongfully accused, but he is no better by the gratuitous abuse of the slanderer. On the other hand the person who is always speaking ill of his neighbors, who can see no honesty or integrity of purpose in any one, who seizes upon every opportunity to draw the eyes of suspicion on his victim, will soon carry the marks of his business in his looks and actions. You can tell the habitual villifier, as you can the habitual drunkard or thief, by his looks. His furtive eye, hang dog expression of face and sneaking self-condemning motion as he moves about in his devilborn practice, as clearly mark him, as though "liar" were plainly branded on every visible portion of his sin-saturated body. In the country the slanderer cannot find enough to occupy his diabolical talent; in great cities there is much more than he can attend to, so that in these two places, he usually abandons his business of abuse and attends to his own affairs. But in villages and small towns he rises to the full height of his hatefulness for having just enough to do and no more, he can be active all the time, yet leave none unattended to, and knowing nearly every one in the place, he is enabled to bring them all within the range of his poisoned arrows, and hating every one, himself included, he fires away with a spirit of reckless hatred and a frenzy of unreasoning jealousy, such as the archfiend himself could not improve upon.

DON'T FRET.—Where's the use of it? You only render yourselves and others unhappy. Yet fretting is an almost universal sin. More or less we are all given to it. We fret over almost everything. In summer because it is too hot, in winter because it is too cold; we fret when it rains because it is wet, and when it doesn't rain because it is dry; when we are sick or when anybody else is sick. In short, if any thing or every thing doesn't go just to suit our particular whims and fancies, we have one grand, general refuge—to fret over it. I am afraid fretting is much more common among women than among men. We may as well own the truth, my fair sisters, if it isn't altogether pleasant. Perhaps it is because the little worries and cares and vexations of our daily life harass our sensitive nerves more than the more extensive enterprises which generally take the attention of men. Great wants develop great resources, but the little wants and worries are hardly provided for, and like the nail that strikes against the saw, they make not much of a mark, but they turn the edges terribly. I think if we look upon all the little worries of one day as a great united worry, self-control to meet it would be developed. But as they generally come one or two little things at a time, they seem so very little that we give way, and the great breach once made in the wall soon grows larger. Many a mother has turned her son against her own sex, and made him dread the society of women, simply by this habit of fretting. I know that many a mother has brought up and developed a daughter just like herself, who, in her turn, would wreck and ruin the comfort of another family circle. And knowing this, my sisters—and brothers, too, if they need it—I know that we ought to set our faces like a flint against this useless, sinful, peace-destroying and home-disturbing habit of fretting.

SCIENTIFIC AND USEFUL.

To make a very strong glue that does not get thick or pasty, dissolve ordinary glue in nitric ether, and add a little bit of caoutchouc.

LEG OF MUTTON STEWED.—Place a small leg of mutton in a stewpan with six carrots, twelve onions, two laurel leaves, two cloves, twelve potatoes, one bunch of parsley and shives, and one large spoonful of gravy. Add salt, and a pound of bacon cut in six pieces. Let it simmer for three hours and a half, turning it often.

RHEUMATISM.—A correspondent in the *English Mechanic* gives the following remedy for curing rheumatic gout, of which he had long been a sufferer. He insulated his bedstead from the floor, by placing underneath each post a broken off bottom of a glass bottle. He says the effect was magical, that he had not been free from rheumatic gout for fifteen years, and that he began to improve immediately after the application of the insulators. We are reminded, by this paragraph from our English contemporary, of a patent obtained through this office for a physician some twelve or more years ago, which created considerable interest at the time. The patent consisted in placing glass cups under the bedposts in similar manner to the above. The patentee claimed to have effected some remarkable cures by the use of his glass insulators, but we have not heard from him for some time. We cannot vouch for any merit in the idea, but it is one easily tried; and as no harm can arise from the experiment, we hope some one will test it and give us the result of his experience.

SUBSTITUTE FOR QUININE.—A German pharmaceutical journal gives an account of the Echises plant, which has attracted considerable attention at the Vienna Exposition, where specimens were exhibited. It is described as growing abundantly in some sections of the Philippine Islands, and the bark has long been used by the natives, under the name of Dita, as a remedy against all kinds of fevers. It is also called, or rather the hygroscopic bitter principle obtained from it, Ditalin. Prof. Xina, a Spaniard, and chief physician of the province of Manila, has experimented with it in the hospitals under his care, and found that ditalin is not only a perfect substitute for quinine, but also that in its use the frequently unpleasant after effects of quinine are avoided. It is administered in the same manner and doses as quinine, and it is perfectly certain in its effect. It is also remarkably efficient as a tonic. Ditalin may be prepared in the same way as quinine. The bark yields about two per cent. of ditalin. A single tree yields a large quantity of bark, without its growth being affected. It is believed that the article, in its prepared state, may be produced at about half the price of quinine.

BLOODLESS SURGICAL OPERATION.—Perhaps one of the greatest discoveries of the present generation in surgery is that of rendering the most terrible and prolonged operations absolutely painless. Only inferior to this in importance is a recent discovery by Esamarch whereby operations of every kind upon the extremities are rendered perfectly bloodless. In the Kingston General Hospital an important operation was performed upon a young woman who had been laid up for a year and a half with disease of the bones of the ankle joint. A piece of [half inch gas] india rubber tubing, four feet long, was taken. The ends of the tubing were fastened together, then three or four times were very tightly passed round the foot, commencing at the toes, like a bandage. The winding on of the upper coil was continued, while the lower coil was now being uncovered in the same order, until the three coils reached just below the knee, where they were fastened. The leg was now perfectly bloodless, and it remained so during the whole of the operation. There was not a single drop of blood lost from first to last, although this operation had always been accompanied by much hemorrhage, the annoyance as well as the danger of which is only known to the surgeon.—*Kingston Whig*.

NATURAL APPETITE.—As a general thing, people should consult their natural desires more in the selection of their food. Such desires are calls to satisfy the wants of the system, and therefore are not given us in vain. If in warm weather the relish for meats and heavy food is less, or even disappears, it should not be eaten; but if, on the other hand, there is a craving for fresh vegetables and fruit, it should by all means be indulged in; it acts like a correcting, purifying medicine on the digestive apparatus, sometimes deranged by the heat of summer. Let nobody be afraid to live during hot weather on vegetable diet exclusively. On the contrary when abstaining from meat one will suffer less from protracted heat, especially when abstaining also from distilled or fermented liquors, and drinking water and milk instead. In winter, on the contrary, we may have a craving for animal food and fat, and then it is time to indulge in it. However, the flesh diet should always be balanced with vegetables and bread or its equivalent. No animal requires perhaps such a variety of food as man, who is neither carnivorous, like the lion, nor herbivorous, as the horse, but omnivorous, like the pig, whose digestive apparatus resembles that of man more than is the case with most other animals. If this is considered rather flattering for the pigs or insulting to men, it cannot be helped.

HUMOROUS SCRAPS.

"No cows, no cream," was the way an intelligent compositor set up the words, "No cross, no crown."

A GROCER gives the reason why eggs are so high as because the hens, owing to the panic, are running on half time.

AN ignorant old lady was asked by a minister visiting her if she had religion. She replied: "I have slight touches of it occasionally."

SOME of the ladies of New Bedford are so modest that they call the legs of their piano-fortes "limbs," and cover them with pantalets.

ECONOMY is said to be carried to such an extent in a town in Michigan that the paper mills have been compelled to suspend operations for want of rags.

A GEORGIA paper publishes a letter which it claims was written by its correspondent in Heaven. Further down it explains that Heaven is a railroad station in Alabama.

AN Indiana paper thus politely expresses an opinion of a judge:—"He knows just about as much of law as a mule does of mineralogy—the chances being in favor of the mule."

"OCH!" said a love-sick Hibernian, "what a recreation it is to be dying of love! It sets the heart aching so delicately there's no taking a wink of sleep for the pleasure of the pain!"

A TROY policeman swore as follows against a prisoner: "The prisoner set upon me, calling me an ass, a precious dolt, a scarecrow, a ragamuffin and idiot—all of which I certify to be true."

MR. SMITH is bound to have his joke. His wife walked nearly in front of a railroad train the other day, and he said that if she had gone a step farther his children would have had a step-mother.

THE editor of a New York child's paper received a letter from a lady subscriber recently, in which was written, "Our Annie died last week after reading the last number of your valuable paper."

THE editor of the Huntsville, Mo., *Herald* pops the question in his paper in this public fashion: "There's a certain girl in this town who can carry our smoke-house keys for life if she'll only say the word."

A KANSAS City tombstone pays the following beautiful tribute to innocence:

"With a yell and a whoop.
He died of the croup."

A TEXAS editor prints the following energetic opinion: "The man who would water petroleum and sell it would sneak into the palace of the King of kings and steal the gilding from the wings of the angels."

A LEARNED but rather long-winded minister, being asked if he did not feel tired after preaching such long sermons, answered, "Na, na; I'm no tired;" to which he added, however, with much pawlike naïveté, "but losh me! hoo tired the folks are whiles!"

A CERTAIN young lady keeps in her port-monnaie a pathetic appeal to the light-fingered gentry, in which the sufferings she would endure if deprived of her money are so feelingly presented, that the purse has been returned to her intact on three occasions.

"Who's there?" said Jenkins, one cold winter night, disturbed in his repose by some one knocking at the street door. "A friend," was the answer. "What do you want?" "Want to stay here all night." "Queer taste—stay there by all means," was the benevolent reply.

MR. H—, resides in Fourth Street, New York. His wife, who is an economical body, had sent a costly silk gown to a French dyer. The dyer himself brought home the silk dress, and unluckily as it happened, met the husband of the lady at the door. "Is madam within?" asked the Frenchman. "And suppose she is, what do you want with her?" "I am dyeing for her, Sare." "You dyeing for my wife! Get out of my house, you scoundrel!" and he had just raised his foot to kick the honest artisan into the street as the lady mad her appearance, and set the matter to rights.

SOME originality has at last found its way into the obituary columns of the George W. Childs—the Philadelphia *Ledger*—rather:

"Lay aside his little trousers,
That our darling used to wear,
He will never on earth want them,
He has climbed the golden stair."

If anybody can read that verse without shedding tears he may safely be called a fiend in human shape. The picture of a little boy climbing golden stairs without his trousers on is very beautiful, and the more so because of the reflection that the little one can never catch cold again.

THE Professor of Natural Philosophy in a certain college recently gave the class a problem to think of during the night, and answer the next day. The question was this: "If a hole were bored through the centre of the earth, from side to side, and a ball dropped into it, what motions would the ball pass through, and where would it come to a state of rest?" The next morning a student was called up to solve the problem. "What answer have you to give to the question?" asked the professor. "Well, really," replied the student, "I have not thought of the main question, but of a preliminary one. How are you going to get that hole bored through?"

OUR PUZZLER.

206. DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

The primals, down, will name a man
Who did refuse a crown;
The finals, up, found unknown lands,
And is of a great renown.

1. A Spanish author who did write Adventures of a famous knight.
2. A minister of France doth show; To Huguenots he was a foe.
3. This organ is shaped like a sphere, And in your head it does appear.
4. Here is a fossil quadruped That's of gigantic size, 'tis said.
5. From rest of Kent did this broad strait, An isle, at one time, separate.
6. A battle is before you brought; Against their king the people fought.
7. In one of Shakspeare's famous plays, Addresses to a lady pays.
8. The "Iron Duke" here met his foe, And did completely overthrow.

207. ARITHMETICAL QUESTION.

A traveller set out from A to B at 5 miles per hour. One hour afterwards another traveller sets out from B to A at 5½ miles per hour, and reaches A 12 minutes after the first traveller. Find the distance from A to B.

208. BURIED BIRDS.

1. He is very smart in many things, you will see.
2. Does your friend Philip love roses, can you inform me?
3. Find a particular key to unlock the door.
4. But stop, he has ants in his garden, as of yore.
5. As it chanced to happen, guineas were scarce one day.
6. Weep not for lost riches, I heard some one then say.
7. Is this wall owing for yet, and never been paid?
8. The murdered Poles for liberty cried, it is said.
9. Richard Crookback, Duke of Gloucester, wanted a horse.
10. While the River Forth rushes madly on its course.
11. At the Black Bull Inn, ether is sold very cheap.
12. A true-hearted hero ne'er should be made to weep.
13. How curious! he cries for a venomous snake.
14. O, look how our pet relishes her tea and cake.
15. To do, verb active or neuter, then you'll find.
16. Is she a gleaner?—this is to finish with, mind.

209. MYTHOLOGICAL ACROSTIC.

The initials of the following, read downwards will name a king of Phrygia who entreated Bacchus that everything he touched might be turned into gold. Apollo changed his ears into those of an ass, because he decided a musical contest in favour of Pan!—

1. The muse who presided over tragic and lyric music.
2. The founder of Troy.
3. The mother of Venus.
4. The god who avenges slighted love.
5. A king of Elis struck by lightning for imitating the thunderbolts of Jove.

210. ENIGMA.

Oh, how many tales of me could be told,
By the young and the poor, the rich and the old;
For I never do good wherever I am,
Altho' I have been from creation of man.
No legs have I got, yet how swift do I go!
And often I cause the blackest of woe;
But if you transpose me, a man's name I show—
A Scriptural one, I would have you to know.

211. ANAGRAMS—EMINENT ECCLESIASTICS.

1. R. sin ran a debt; 2. Pet prayer, get hog gore; 3. No, he sly Jew; 4. H. can. Rome's mart; 5. Char hall, sop bud; 6. I'll drawl on, H.; 7. Ropen bin bosh.

212. BIRDS ENIGMATICALLY EXPRESSED.

1. A cake, a metal, and the persuasive to a horse; 2. A sweet substance and a guide; 3. A journey, a vowel, and partners; 4. A liquid measure and fuss; 5. A scent and a bird; 6. A quadruped and a number (reversed); An English river (beheaded).

213. DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

1. To dwell in this it is forlorn.
2. The "prince of painters" here was born.
3. A piece that's used in playing chess.
4. Eternal this is, I confess.

5. I'm sure you've heard it in the street.
6. A perfume that is very sweet.
7. The German made the French retreat.
8. These roots and plants we often eat.
9. Here is one of Lord Byron's lays.
10. Whoever this obeys not, pays.
11. If we live in this slothful state,
12. To come to this will be our fate.
13. In Iceland 'tis a burning spring.
14. He did amidst the Italians sing.
15. The earth is shaped like this, we learn.
16. A port for which to China turn.

The initials now please to read down,
They'll a general show of renown;
And the finals, read upwards, proclaim
An American patriot's name.

214. LITERAL CHARADE.

In link, not in chain; sleet, not in rain;
tune, not in song; short, not in long; rain, not
in snow; fast, not in slow; view, not in sight;
row, not in fight; strong, not in weak; month,
not in week; in some, not in few, something
deadly brings to view.

CAISSA'S CASKET.

SATURDAY, Dec. 27th, 1873.

* * * All communications relating to Chess must be addressed "CHECKMATE, London, Ont."

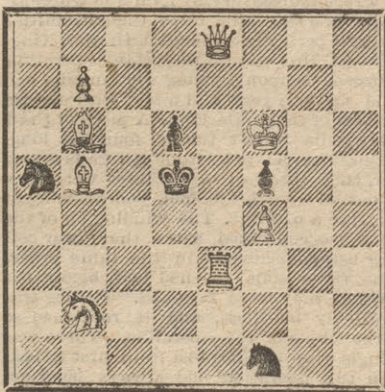
TO OUR READERS.

An unexpected call upon the spare moments of the conductor of this department of the FAVORITE has compelled him for the present at least to forego the pleasure of a weekly chat with the FAVORITE readers upon the game of chess. For the past two or three weeks our games have not received that attention they merited, nor such as the editor would gladly have been able to devote to them. To those who have become interested in the study of the openings, we earnestly recommend the purchase of Staunton's "Handbook" and "Praxis" from which sufficient instruction may be obtained, aided by daily practice with good players, to make you all proficient in the game. As heretofore our problems shall be of the first order, and in compliance with the wishes of some of our friends, the solutions shall be withheld for just four weeks, to give more time for the study of the difficult positions, and to enable solvers to communicate to the editor the result of their investigations.

Once again, we extend an invitation to Canadian, American and Foreign readers for contributions of original problems. Let them be as good as you can make them, and they will be all the more creditable to the genius of the composer, and of greater interest to the solver.

And we ask as a favor of our readers that when they solve our problems they will at once mail a postal card with the moves by which they accomplish the desired work, with any remarks as to the character of the problems they may feel disposed to make. By complying with these wishes of ours, our friends will cheer us in our efforts and will help us to make Caissa's Casket constantly more interesting. To all our friends and well-wishers we extend the compliments of the joyous season.

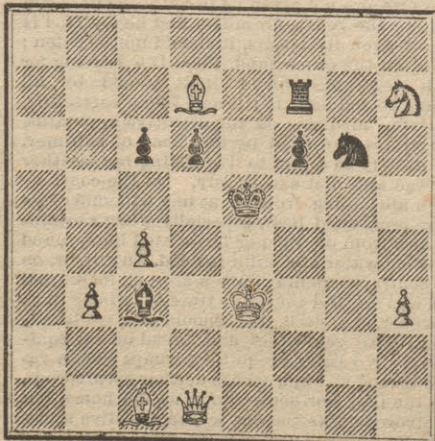
PROBLEM No. 31.

By A. Z. HUGGINS.
BLACK.

WHITE.

White to play and mate in two moves.

PROBLEM No. 32.

By A. Z. HUGGINS.
BLACK.

WHITE.

White to play and mate in three moves.

THE SENTIMENT OF CHRISTMAS.

There can be no doubt that Christmas is held to possess its special virtues and moralities, because at this season we are more willing than usual to listen to the promptings of our hearts, and encourage kindly sentiments towards each other. The prominent idea which fills the minds of all who reflect, or of multitudes who do not reflect, is that of a rubbing off of scores with all men, moral as well as pecuniary, of beginning again with new hopes, and of a celebration of the compact with ourselves and the world by hospitality, good fellowship, and good wishes. The main idea is derived from the religious character of the festival: it is that of forgiveness. Of all the social virtues, forgiveness is, perhaps, the most prolific. Like all purely unselfish feelings, it is a blessing to self. We forgive for the delight of forgiving; and we increase thereby our own chance of forgiveness. We did not sow the one seed in anticipation of such a harvest; but we gain an abundant crop, and the more precious because utterly unexpected. To banish animosity from our heart is to get rid of a disagreeable and troublesome visitor; to expel hate is to free ourselves from a corroding disease. But it is far better even than that; for we not only expel that which is unpleasant and hurtful, but in the place of it we receive and make one with our own being—spirit of our spirit—that which is pleasant and beneficial. Go out, Hatred—come in, Love! Get thee gone, Rancour; and welcome, most welcome, thou sweet-visaged and full-souled Charity! The heart being once opened to forgive, cannot be shut again immediately. A whole train of generous feelings, that only want encouragement and an open door, rush in and take possession, and cannot be extruded again in one day, although we should try ever so much. It may not bless the man who is forgiven. It may be scorned and contemned; but what of that? The more it is scorned, the greater is its brilliancy; the greater the contempt and ingratitude with which it is received, the greater its own merit. Besides, the man forgiven may not know that he is forgiven. There is no ostentation in the matter. There may be Mercy without Forgiveness, but wherever Forgiveness is, Mercy cannot be absent. Mercy, too, may be proud and haughty, and even revengeful; but Forgiveness is always humble. A savage may be merciful, but it takes a Christian to forgive. The minor virtues of Christmas-time are all contagious. When all the world forms good wishes for a merry Christmas and a happy new year, who is the churl who would refuse to respond to them or share them? If it be true that "one fool makes many," it is still more true that good wishes beget good deeds. Kindly feelings are as epidemic as foolish ones; perhaps more so. In ordinary seasons, the distance between the tongue and the heart may be somewhat long and devious; but the good wishes that are upon the tongue of all these must perforce take up their habitation in the hearts of some of them.

SOCIAL SILENCE.

There are few so self-enwrapped that they have not known the pleasure of a social chat; but not everyone has tasted the exquisite sweetness of social silence. We do not, however, envy those who have not, for we think it a proof that they are strangers to true, heartfelt friendship. With people for whom we have that kind of ordinary care by some called affection or esteem we put ourselves on our best behavior, and strive that the audible interchange of thought shall be so constant as to prevent weariness. But when those meet whose minds are in unison, and whose hearts beat responsive to the same thoughts, the strongest evidence of their enjoyment of each other's presence. In the words of Fénelon, "they say nothing: they are content to be together without anything to say." And this, so far from resulting in either tedium or disgust, is full of the serenest happiness. There is a touch of deep feeling, hardly to be looked for, from Horace Walpole which illustrates our meaning. On the loss of his friend Chute he writes: "And him I loved to have here, as our friendship was so entire, and we knew one another so entirely, that he alone was never the least restraint to me. We passed many hours without saying a syllable to each other, for we were above ceremony."

The truth that, when between two there is the deep sense of sympathy which is founded in true love there is often more real communion in silence than in speech, has entirely escaped the notice of those who, from the rough and ready way they look at things, can only see the ruder and more palpable phases of the intercourse of man with man; but it has been keenly appreciated by those who have natures sensitive enough to feel the more subtle influences which knit human hearts together. It is such as Ella who can say "Can there be no sympathy without the gabble of words? Give me, Master Zimmerman, a sympathetic silence." From such a poet as he to whom we owe the "Angel of the House" it is to be expected that loving silence should be recognized, as in this exquisite description of domestic bliss, where it is made the chief feature of the scene.

For hours the clock upon the shelf
Has all the talking to itself;
But to and fro her needle runs
Twice, while the clock is striking once.
And when a wife is well in reach,
Not silence separates, but speech.
Nor need we wonder that Leigh Hunt—so buoyant, sensitive, and enthusiastic, yet withal so

patient, brave, and enduring—who was keenly alive to all the more subtle rays which with gladdening light beam forth from loving heart to loving heart, should bring forcibly out this power of silence when painting "that heaven this side the stars."

By men call'd home, when some blest pair are met

As we are now; sometimes in happy talk,
Sometimes in silence (also a sort of talk,
Where friends are matched) each at its gentle task

Of book, or household need, or meditation.

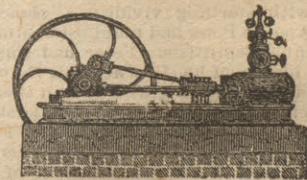
So much, indeed, has this ability to appreciate sympathetic silence been esteemed by some, that they have even made it a test of character. Thus Henry Mackenzie draws his Montauban as priding himself because his new acquaintance M. de Roubigné has already admitted him to such a friendship: "He does not think himself under the necessity of eternally talking to entertain me; and we sometimes spend a morning together pleased with each other's society, though we do not utter a dozen sentences." And in the same novel one of the letters, after referring to the great liveliness of Mlle. Dorville, proceeds: "Oh Beauvares! I have laid out more soul in sitting five minutes with Julia de Roubigné in silence than I should in a year's conversation with this little Dorville." Nor is "the Man of Feeling" to be accused of sentimentalism in this. There is something greater in those who can give themselves up to the full enjoyment of silence than in those who can only find pleasure in a continual flow of speech. However much this may be ridiculed by those who are captivated by outward glitter and flash it will not be denied by anyone who understand the deeper, though less showy, forms of character. Thus to many it gives a revelation of the noble womanhood that was to arise from the childhood of Mary Schimmelpennick, when though she was forced to pass her time with an invalid mother requiring absolute quiet, she could say: "I was allowed to sit in the room, but to be in perfect silence, unless when my mother called me to fetch anything, or addressed to me some little word, which seemed not so much to break the silence as to make it more complete and happy by an unintermitted flow of hearts."

If silence be ever golden, assuredly it is that silence in which sympathising hearts find delight—that silence which shows itself in its fullest beauty in the loving intercourse of man and woman: for as it has been well said, "It is a happy time when a man and a woman can be long silent together, and love one another the better that neither speaks of love"—or as it is put in a modern poem:

Which was most full—our silence or our speech?
Oh sure our silence! Though we talked high things

Of life and death, and of the soul's great wings,
A knowledge pure, which only love can teach;
And have sat beside the lake's calm beach,
Wordless and still, a long and summer day,
As if we only watch'd the insect play,
Or rippling wave.

LATEST despatches from Cuba advise great dissatisfaction at the departure of the *Virginius*. A large crowd assembled on the 12th, parading the streets, and making great demonstrations of disapprobation in the Plaza de Armas, in front of Captain-General Jovellar's residence, who, however, succeeded in dispersing the mob towards midnight.



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